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# The Sewanee Review

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EDITED BY

WILLIAM S. KNICKERBOCKER



January-March, 1929

- H. D., A STUDY IN SENSITIVITY . . . . . *Frank A. Doggett*  
PORTRAIT OF A SAURIAN . . . . . *Charles Frederick Harrold*  
AN AMERICAN REMEMBERS OXFORD . . . . . *Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr.*  
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A NEW TESTAMENT FOR FLAMING YOUTH . . . . . *Paul F. Laubenstein*  
WHITMAN AND EMERSON . . . . . *Clarence L. F. Gohdes*  
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POEMS by: Merrill Moore and Alice Freda Braunlich.

BOOK REVIEWS:

- Abercrombie's View of Poetry . . . . . *Theodore Stenberg*  
Some Victorian Novelists . . . . . *F. W. Knickerbocker*  
Miss Millay in Transition . . . . . *Edd Winfield Parks*  
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French Culture in America . . . . . *Ernest E. Leisy*  
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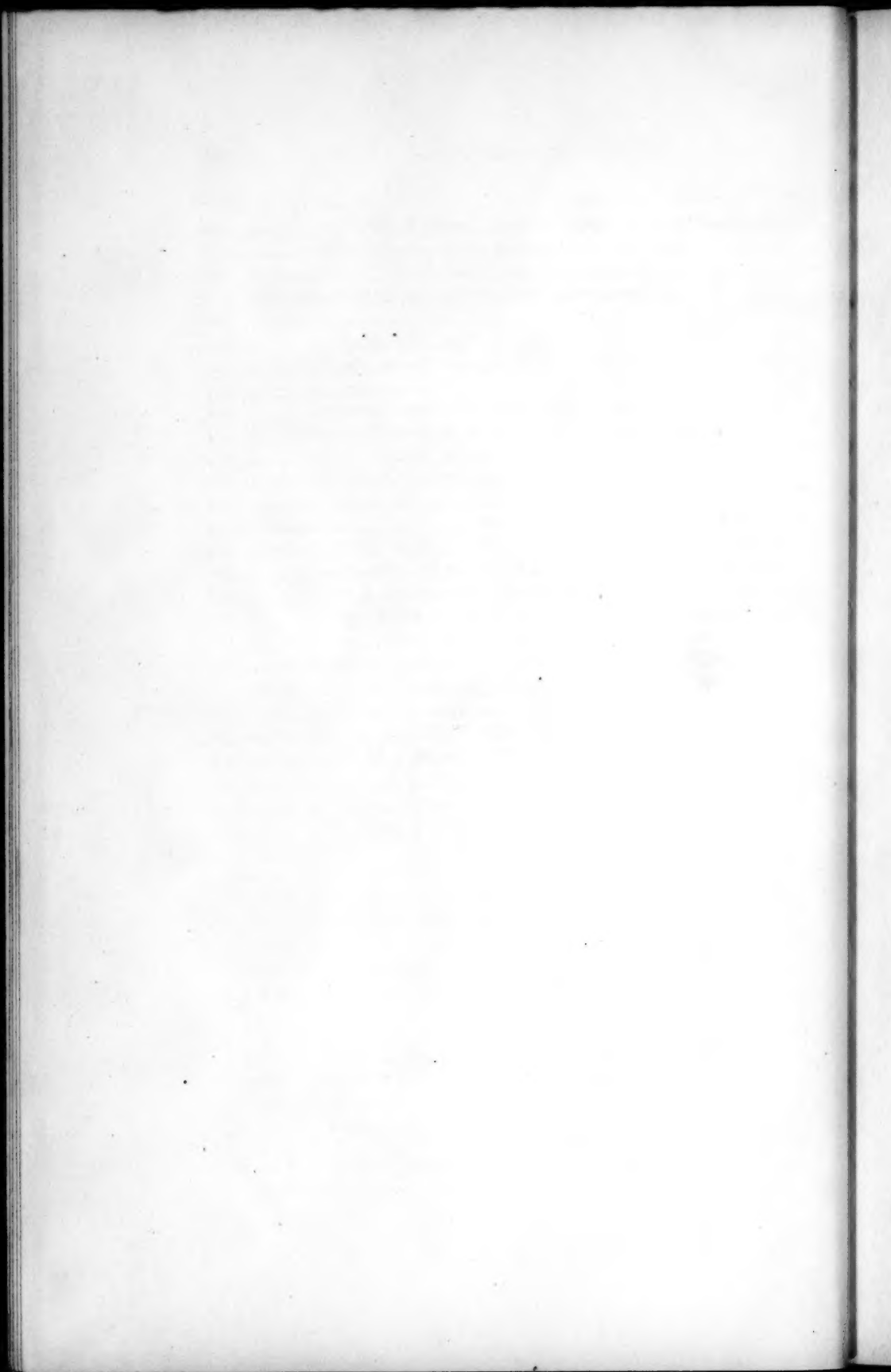
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# THE SEWANEE REVIEW

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[No. 1

H. D.

## A STUDY IN SENSITIVITY

The fixation of as indefinite a term as classicism is certainly useful here, as the word will be used throughout this writing in the sense of that attention to a selection of details and arrangement of form which would tend to appeal to the emotions through the intellect. To one who is as extreme a classicist as H. D., a knowledge of the machinery of verse is of as much moment as the material selected, and as regards her early work one might say both discreetly and truthfully that it is not so much the matter as the manner that is important. The emotion resulting from such a synthesis is one that H. D. calls "intellectual ecstasy"; a curious condition in which intensity of emotion is quite dependent upon the perfection and definiteness of the artificial form: the passion of a sea-gull in a bright steel cage.

*Sea Garden*, with which H. D., made her formal bow to the literary world, has that fault common to nearly all first books—technical self-consciousness as well as a satiety of the lyric of atmosphere. In such a poem as "Mid-day" the emotional effect engendered is completely one of technique. To quote:

A slight wind shakes the seed-pods—  
my thoughts are spent  
as the black seeds.  
My thoughts tear me,  
I dread their fever.  
I am scattered in its whirl.  
I am scattered like  
the hot shrivelled seeds.

The desired reaction, much of which is stimulated by repetition, is that of oppressive heat, the relaxation of the physical functions, and the stuttering, gasping play of the consciousness. In this one stanza "seed" is repeated twice, each time carefully ending a line and a complete thought. "My thoughts" is repeated once; the first time the swing of the perspective is from the subjective to the objective, while the second repetition is entirely introspective, the sentence ending with complete subjectivity, which the next sentence continues, "whirl", of course, referring to "fever". Then the word "whirl" connotes the motion of the wind in the seeds and the thought of condition is related to the objective absorption of the consciousness; "I am scattered" is employed twice in the effort of expression under the stunning rays of the noon sun. This, obviously, is the desired reaction. Very true; yet in this careful faceting and refaceting of phrases is there not an atmosphere of stiffness, of emotion held under too tight a rein? This seems to disturb an excellent offering of details by artificiality; the hands are clasped tightly in the attitude of prayer and the eyes wander to see if others are looking.

When H. D. touches on such a subject as the "The Shrine", her mood is one of austere ardor, and her strength lies not only in the exquisite polish of the lines; it is embedded as much in the happy simplicity of her images: "the staggering ships", "the salt stretch of your beach", "the splendors of your ragged coast", "where rollers shot with blue cut under deeper blue". Perhaps the panoramic magnificence of the subject influenced the manner; perhaps this is spontaneous utterance, or even a momentary indulgence; at any rate there is more ecstasy and less restraint here than is usual in *Sea Garden*. Here is onomatopœia reflective of the same mood: Near your shrine "the sea-gulls clang beyond the breakers" and your poet says of you that "you shrill under hail and sound thunder when thunder sounds".

The short line in which H. D. so deftly frames her Euripidean translations is used effectively for the first time in the "Wind Sleepers". This poem is swept with more movement and

quickened by more changes in time beat than is common in *Sea Garden*. The dramatic element could not be improved and the atmosphere is ably and evenly surcharged with fear and reverence. Throughout there is the frightened pattering of bare feet flinging through storm-scared air, naked bodies aquiver with excited awe; this feeling of mysticism is intensified by a use of the past participle, as "the hurled sand" and "the dropped wave", which is most fitting in view of the lustral subject.

The great versatility in the use of images that H. D. discloses in the "Cliff Temple" shows her unusual taste; there is no satiety of sight or hearing, of sensation or movement, nor is there a barrenness of feeling, but moderation and equality of all these. Height-sickness, a difficult theme, embroiders the simplicity of the lines, and one can perceive how much more the static image lends to a feeling of movement than any use of metre could ever give. The eyes fill and the head swims at the reading of such passages as "the world heaved", "you lift, you are the world edge, pillar for the sky arch", "the hill path mounted swifter than my feet",

And under and under,  
the wind booms:  
it whistles, it thunders,  
it growls—it presses the grass  
beneath its great feet.

No Greek living on the peninsula or in the islands, even before Christ, and using the polished free verse of H. D. could have written with more self-effacement than she has in "Acon", at least not for our machine-dimmed eyes, now that these two thousand years are past; none before this has chiselled out of parian lychnites more Hellenic a frieze than this so perfectly wrought here in cold and even stanzas.

The frequency of such phrases as "drift of the sea" and "broken petals" and "salt-washed rocks" deters somewhat the effect that a frugal use of these terms might bring; nevertheless, there is a remarkable paucity of repetitions for a first book. At the end of *Sea Garden* H. D. has attained technical mastery of her material and by the first poems of *The God* she has

shown herself entirely at ease in her medium. The hard, unstained squareness of the temple steps has been crossed, we have stood upon the prostyle with its grouped columns and frozen fresco, and now we enter the cool marble corridors of her mind, graced with perfection and perfected with grace.

Conventional verse-forms utilize the vowel as a background to the beat of accented syllables, which determines the internal melody of the lines, and this use of vowel values is a mark of distinction among English poets. When "cadenced verse" was at the height of its popularity, one of the principal achievements of the imagists was to bring out vowel possibilities; H. D. has given the illusion of rhythm by suggesting metre with repetition and vowel usage.

Such a superabundance of visual images as there is in the collection of poems under the title, *The God*, is somewhat disappointing in view of the versatility that H. D. has shown heretofore in her imagery; and there is a fullness in her lists of flowers, "Cyclamen-colored", azure, and gold, that dulls such poems as "Eurydice".

However, there is one gigantic stride made; "Adonis" discovers the continuity that the poet has achieved through her arrangement of repetition. No longer is there the self-conscious feeling so apparent before this, nor is there any more of the over-exact definiteness, the carefully cut little features of her early work with such fine edges and sharp details that the eyes were strained and the nerves restrained. Instead there is this:

Each of us like you  
has died once,  
each of us like you  
has passed through drift of wood-leaves—

or

Each of us like you  
has died once,  
each of us like you  
Stands apart, like you  
fit to be worshipped

Apart from the unusual subject-matter, apart from the obscure thought-content, apart, even, from the vagueness of the lyric

utterance, more suggestive of Swinburne than H. D., is one poem, the form of which is so unique as to require some attention. This stanza from "The Tribute" will serve as illustration:

Squalor spreads its hideous length  
through the carts and the asses' feet;  
squalor has entered and taken our songs  
and we haggle and cheat,  
praise fabrics worn threadbare,  
ring false coin for silver,  
offer refuse for meat.

Here is, apparently, quite a definite rhyme and metrical regularity standing as H. D.'s first ambitious work in conventional verse. Whether the form is responsible or not, this poem lacks the spontaneity and originality of the others in *The God*; place it beside the liquid flow of "Sitalkas" or the restless movement of "Oread" and judge in what medium H. D. is most at ease.

Not only because of the obscurity of subject-matter, but as much through the sympathy of her approach is her knowledge of mythology never so apparent as in this collection, which shows a scarcity of the pure lyric and an abundance of poems containing a slight dramatic element which H. D. fingers with much ease and as much skill.

The allegro movement of the choruses from "Iphigeneia in Aulis" is given the needed staccato touch with sharply turned short line stanzas, which by the precision of their linear divisions and through a slight suggestion of metre offer enough organic action to silhouette the narrative element.

While fifty sea-spirits  
moved and paused  
to mark the beat  
of chanted words  
where light flashed  
below them on the sand.

Although her translations are more adapted than literal, the detachment of self from subject is classic as that of those who wrote the dramas with votive minds and devout hearts dedicated



to the Grape God; not once does she permit herself to intrude the worded frieze of Gods and heroes.

Instead of the usual connective use of rhyme, she employs it here with unusual melodic result; there is rarely more than one in a stanza, and it resounds in the memory with all the ringing delicacy of a mountain echo.

The exquisite lyric passages of *Hymen* are colored with delicate symbolism, but disrupted by over-lengthy stage directions, which, in spite of the simplicity and stateliness of their prose, break up the continuity of the choruses; among the other pieces in this series—"Leda", a fluent bit of organic rhythm; "Demeter", obscure grandeur; translations of Sappho and several poems on the "Hippolytus"—is "The Islands", which is important, aside from its lyric elegance, as a declaration of H. D.'s æstheticism.

To H. D. beauty is a thing of peril, of ecstatic pain and cold, cruel emotion; no gentle sloping beach with pendant palms and sheltered gardens, not the languid loveliness of inland water and its subtly tinted shadowing, no quiet shores, but rock-set beaches and laboring seas and salt-whipped winds. Never does she entice her emotions with loveliness; she lashes them with beauty. Her passion is cold and even with the relentless splendor of a heaving wave.

What is Greece if you draw back  
from the terror  
and cold splendour of song  
and its bleak sacrifice?

The most noticeable feature of *Heliadora* is the increased use of conventional verse and the substitution of rhythmic effects for imagery. This slight alteration of outlook displays H. D.'s adaptability to changing fashions, for she is almost as skilful in this restricted medium as she was with the more plastic form. She seems to lack somewhat the original freshness and vigor, however, and solemnity begins to take the place of spontaneity.

Although the verse of H. D. is as precise as a seventeenth-century organ arrangement, her prose is the wind in the trees;

when a definite diction is used with flexible forms, a cold simplicity usually crystallizes the composition, while the plasticity of prose with a formal and indefinite wording foment an involved utterance.

*Palimpsest* contains three narratives, each distinct as regards characters and setting yet linked by an attitude common to all three; a sort of prose sonata. The plots all derive their chief stimulus from the characters and seem to result from the characterizations; only in one or two places are the guiding strings apparent. The novel, then, is another form in which H. D. displays her ability to overcome technical difficulties.

A prose in which rhythm devolves from arrangement as well as choice of words, in which repetition neither nauseates nor impedes the thought, where the architecture of the sentence acts as a prism through which the thought may be seen in a different light as it progresses and yet does not change its inviolate nature; this is the prose of *Palimpsest*. There are mannerisms, slightly confusing at first, as the seventeenth-century practice of omitting the article and the use of a refrain or motif to recall an emotion at one time and an ethos at another. The imagery that she used so effectively in her verse is here enlarged to description and is as lovely as ever, if more blurred.

The temptation insinuates itself to compare this prose, with its recurrent themes and its rich inner melody, to that of some seventeenth-century stylist: let us say John Donne. This is from "Devotions":

The heavens are not the less constant, because they move continually, because they move continually one and the same way. The earth is not the more constant, because it lies still continually, because continually it changes and melts in all the parts thereof.

and this from *Palimpsest*:

Her thoughts, as those two palm-doves, padded softly, leaving, as those doves, small, dainty scratches on the exquisitely dusted surface of her brain; her thoughts marked the exquisitely neat layers of her brain as those two doves

marked the cool sand that drifted between the brilliant orange nasturtiums and the neat winter-verdant grass that bordered the path curves; the doves left delicate marks on the sifted sand, of delicate, deliberate, tiny claws.

The scattered, disconnected phrases and long parenthetical expressions disconcert one who is accustomed to the gradated tier upon tier of orderly thought that she has grouped so often, who formerly affected neither a too intricate subtlety nor a too obvious simplicity.

The principal character of the first book, and for that matter of the other books, had the neurosis of hyper-sensitivity; the little things of earth were sensed by her sharply and with all their infinite details. A tuft of grass was an island and the descent of leaves resounded deafeningly to her startled ears; she had an intense power of concentration that would magnify all that struck her consciousness; an atmosphere would involve her emotion and determine her happiness. She was tortured by too fine a sense of the æsthetic and reacted too violently to it. "This was the perfected ecstasy where body having trained its perceptions finds itself the tool of sheer intoxicating intellect."

Each moment is the inevitable result of that preceding it and there are no reactions without stimuli—such is H. D.'s feeling for continuity and the ease of her arrangement.

"The stream of consciousness technique" that H. D. uses throughout the second part of *Palimpsest* leaves the reader numb and confused. Under the narcotic influence of that blurred groping moment—first thought after reading—there is no perception of symmetry, no concise sensation derived from a definite plot-design, only the rather dim outlines of two characters and the nebulous, illusive suggestion of several others. Perhaps the growth of the verse that one's mind follows so eagerly as it winds in and out the pages offers this confusion; or it may be the atmosphere that permeates this tale. Reflection brings the desired crystallization. Gradually the narratives and characters become distinct and the surmise persists that she has brought clarity to a method that bears the connotation of a vague, restless mental condition. This conviction may be the

result of auto-suggestion; one is so confident in this author's powers of "arrow-vibrant thought".

When one reads the lyrics in *Hymen* on the theme of "Hippolytus" one wishes that H. D. had written the drama *Hippolytus Temporizes* at an earlier date; it lacks the eager feeling of the former Phædra poems, and it is imbued with a vague enthusiasm that has been filtered through a conventional verse form, losing images while gaining a certain solidity. Again there are the fluent short-line stanzas. The plot and situations are deftly turned, but the characters are weak with the exception of Phædra and Myrrhina. The choruses and the prelude, which is quoted from *Hymen*, are exquisite, the former showing a change in manner that is rather mediæval.

A fluid feeling of fatality spills from the pages, gathering up the alluvial looseness of the expression and leaving an unfirm dramatic delta; a departure from the earlier attitude. This may presage a change in H. D.'s manner, a transition that one reluctantly feels may be romantic. In the high-tide of Romanticism, when abandon is the full moon and vagueness the broken wave, a back-wash of classicism, with restraint the shore wind, is but little noticed and less appreciated.

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## PORTRAIT OF A SAURIAN

SAMUEL ROGERS (1763-1855)

Many of us already know the story. No doubt, some of us have let our imaginations attempt (perhaps a little vagrantly) to picture No. 22 St. James Place on a memorable day in early November, 1811, when young Lord Byron, lame and haughty, and newly famous, with "glossy, curling, and picturesque hair", but with subdued and gentle manners, entered the white stone Regency mansion. The owner, whom he had never seen but whose mild and stately poetry he had long loved, had for several years been the talk of London as the arbiter of literary circles, a malignant wit, and a magnificent host. We do not know precisely with what feelings Lord Byron entered. Did he permit himself the ill-bred liberty of gazing curiously at the famous staircase which was later to be adorned with the frieze taken from the Panathenaic procession among the Elgin marbles? Did he look at the mantelpiece executed by Flaxman; at the "cabinet for antiquities" designed, carved, and ornamented by Stothard; at the numerous Etruscan vases; the graceful furniture designed after Greek models by his host? Did he observe the great shadowy paintings on the walls—Raphael's "Madonna and Child", Titian's "Christ Appearing to the Magdalene", or the nearly priceless specimens of Giorgione, Guido, Reubens, Dürer, Gainsborough?

Probably not. The young poet had come, as a humble admirer, to pay his respects to perhaps the most revered poet of the age, Samuel Rogers. Little could he know that, a few years later, in a moment more angry than accurate, he would coin the satiric epithet, "beau, bard, and banker", for the gentleman he was about to meet. Mr. Rogers was waiting for him in the drawing-room: a small, slender man, with what Carlyle later called "a pale head, white, bare, and cold as snow", a lugubrious countenance with large "blue eyes, cruel and scornful", glittering with unspoken wit that might cut his pursed lips when uttered. An innate delicacy and unexpected tenderness led him thus to wait alone out of con-



sideration for his guest's lameness, and to conceal two other guests, Moore and Campbell, in the adjoining room until the appointed time. Over the moment that followed, when Byron stood before "the poet Rogers", there must descend a curtain of silence, for no record remains of what the two men said to each other.

Soon Moore and Campbell entered. Rogers was forty-eight but looked nearly sixty, and carried the air of perfect courtesy; Moore, who was thirty-two, was the smallest man of the group, but as handsome and lively as Byron; Campbell, at thirty-four, was the least distinguished and would not have been present had he not unexpectedly "dropped in". The four poets were escorted to the dining room for one of those breakfasts for which Rogers was noted.

Rogers spoke to Byron: would he take some soup?

"No, I never take soup."

"Perhaps some fish?" came blandly from the host.

"No, I never eat fish."

"Certainly some mutton, then."

The same answer: an enigmatic and perplexing refusal.

But our perfect host has perfect poise. "A glass of wine?"

"Thank you, I never taste wine."

While Moore and Campbell conceal their desire to stare in surprise at this refusal, Rogers finds it necessary to ask his guest what he *does* eat.

"I eat nothing but biscuits and soda water."

Our host is not prepared for such an irregular appetite and can supply neither soda water nor biscuits. But Byron takes a plateful of potatoes, mashes them with his fork, drenches them with vinegar, and eats them heartily. The conversation turns upon Walter Scott, who the year before added to his spreading fame by publishing *The Lady of the Lake* and who had recently published *The Vision of Don Roderick*. Comment later drifts to Joanna Baillie, whose latest tragedy, *The Family Legend*, is being played in Edinburgh.

The table talk contrived two things which were frequently happening in Rogers's life: the grouping of celebrated figures of

the day into convivial social relationships, and the reconciliation between two of his friends, on this occasion Moore and the new-comer, Lord Byron.<sup>1</sup> For us, who have thus permitted ourselves in imagination to construct the scene from the accounts by Rogers's biographers, Clayden and Ellis, the occasion is peculiarly appropriate for introducing us to his life and significance. It provides for the mention of those features which have lingered in the minds of those few readers who know anything about so forgotten a figure: his literary breakfasts, his cadaverous and wrinkled ugliness, his wealth and ease, the vast number of his friends and connections among the prominent minds of his time, his acid wit, his superb charity, the wide but ephemeral fame of his poetry.

Rogers's ugliness alone would have made him remarkable. It has been the subject of mirth since Lydia White beheld him sitting with the Italian poet, Foscolo, and exclaimed, "Good God! The quick and the dead!"—until Mr. Chesterton not long ago mentioned his "phosphorescent and corpse-like brilliancy". Sydney Smith's habitual reference to him as "the departed" was amply ornamented by a French valet who, mistaking Rogers for Moore, threw the company into consternation by announcing "M. Le Mort". There was laughter when one day Rogers emerged last from a visit in the catacombs and Lord Dudley, suddenly shaking him by the hand, said, "Good-bye, Rogers". But the innumerable jokes about his appearance were taken in good part by the fastidious, pale, little man, who simply included them in his store of witty anecdotes with which he regaled his breakfast guests.

His very *tête morte* lent something to the rich simplicity of his famous house, and enhanced the faultless taste with which he had furnished it with antiques. His delicate little figure moved gracefully among the poets, the critics, the dandies, the wits, who regarded his drawing-room as one of the social and

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<sup>1</sup>Moore, who meets Byron here for the first time, had resented a passage in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* as ridiculing the duel between Moore and Jeffrey, and had asked Rogers to invite Byron and him to his house for a reconciliation. There is something of farce not only in the duel but in the matter of reconciliation as well.

literary hubs of the city. And not only at home but abroad he was a familiar figure. His meticulous expression lit up with wit at nearly every country house. Probably no hero or man of genius, from the time of Nelson and Crabbe to that of Tennyson failed to dine delectably at his table. The company was carefully chosen, according to antipathies and affinities; and the number, rarely exceeding ten, prevented breaking up into groups, made a weary monologue improbable and permitted a natural informality. Each guest had the whole company for audience. Mackintosh's wonderful talk, Wordsworth's austere pronouncements, Sydney Smith's irrepressible fun, found free play at Rogers's gatherings. The conversation rarely settled upon politics. One would have listened in vain for striking talk on the death of George III, on the Six Acts, the Manchester massacre, the trial of Queen Caroline, the settlement of post-Napoleonic Europe. But the breakfast table grew exciting over the publication of a new poem, the utterance of a crackling epigram, or the moribund Johnsonese of Dr. Parr—"Sir, you are incapable of doing justice to your own argument; you weaken it by diffusion and perplex it by reiteration!"

Even the briefest summary of Rogers's life becomes a record of rich experience and ironic incident. The more than ninety-two years he was to live began on July 30, 1763, at Stoke Newington, in the midst of a wealthy family of bankers. His life was to consist in writing and publishing poetry in the tradition of Gray and Goldsmith; in making leisurely tours to Scotland, France, Italy, Wales; in withdrawing from his position in his father's banking house and settling in London; into years of conversation, art-collecting, writing. His father had put on mourning for the "slaughter at Lexington", bidding his family to regard England as a tyrant toward her American colonies; had sheltered Priestley from an angry mob; and had brought up his children in strict Non-conformist principles. The eighteenth century lay full and mellow about Rogers's infancy: he was eating his eighth birthday pudding on the day that Gray died; he saw Haydn play at a concert in a tie-wig and with a sword at his side; he sat near Mary Wollstonecraft at Stoke Newington Chapel; in the Gordon riots he saw cartloads of girls on their way to execution at Tyburn; in 1780 he chatted with Wilkes who came into the office to discuss politics with his father; he and his friend Maltby lifted

the knocker at Dr. Johnson's door, then ran in terror lest the Doctor actually appear, and were later assured by Boswell that they would have been received "with all kindness"; he heard Burke compliment Sir Joshua Reynolds on his last discourse at the Royal Academy in 1790; and he saw the deceased John Wesley lying in state in 1791. Yet he lived to recount it to Thackeray, Dickens, and Tennyson....

At eighteen this banker's son read Goldsmith and Gray on the way to work. His first efforts were a Johnsonian essay published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, and an "Ode to Superstition" in close imitation of Gray. These works, together with letters of introduction from local men of parts, enabled him in 1789 to make a Scotch tour which was particularly rich in literary encounters. He breakfasted with Robertson, heard Blair preach, took coffee with Mrs. Piozzi, and supped with Adam Smith—all in one day. He later realized that the one flaw in the visit was his passing within thirty miles of Dumfries without knowing of the rising genius of Burns. In 1791, during a momentary lull in the French Revolution, he visited Paris. There he dined with Condorcet and Lafayette, attended the opera, looked at paintings, and was told by Diderot: "Never let a Frenchman come nearer to you than this"—the philosopher stretched out his arm in an emphatic manner. Shortly after, while at work on the poem that was to make him "dean of poets", he wandered into Wales, and noted "in a hall...a poor blind girl...playing on the harp most exquisitely such airs as made Gray put his last hand to the unfinished ode of 'The Bard'." The chief events that followed were of a similar character: the publication of his *magnum opus*—*The Pleasures of Memory*—, the meeting with Charles James Fox, in 1798, with whom he had a most admirable friendship, the publication of *Columbus* (1812), *Human Life* (1819), *Italy* (1822 and 1828), the ripening of the friendship with Wordsworth, whom he met in 1803, and the settling at 22 St. James Place into what he called a "life of satisfied desires".

The desires were numerous but they were satisfied in no way more richly than in the success of his poetry. In 1792 his *The*



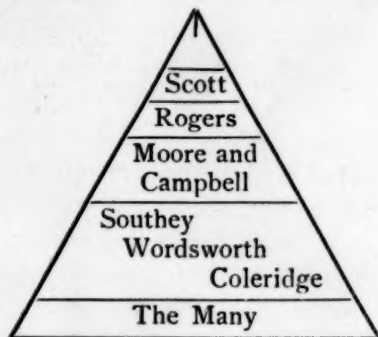
*Pleasures of Memory* came as a thrilling event to readers living in a period when, as Macaulay said, "poetry had fallen into such decay that Mr. Hayley was considered a great poet." Cowper had published most of his poems and his translations of Homer. The sentimental, abortive Della Cruscan School was only waiting for Gifford's blasting criticism. Tom Moore was a boy of fourteen; Byron was a child of four; Wordsworth was in France drinking the bliss of a false dawn; Coleridge had just gained a medal for a Greek ode at Cambridge and was regarded as a revolutionist; Southey was yet to win a similar distinction at Balliol. Thus it was that Rogers's frail stature loomed magnificently in a Lilliputia between the vanished giants of his father's time and the Romantic titans soon to appear. There was only Cowper to rival him. While the great group of evangelical readers read *The Task*, another group, "polite society", was reading

Mark yon old mansion frowning through the trees,  
Whose hollow turret woos the whistling breeze.  
That casement, arched with ivy's brownest shade,  
First to these eyes the light of heaven conveyed.  
The mouldering gateway strews the grass-grown court,  
Once the calm scene of many a simple sport;  
When nature pleased, for life itself was new,  
And the heart promised what the fancy drew.

The nostalgia for Goldsmith's sedate and mellow scenes whispered here and was appeased. Thenceforth the author was "the poet Rogers", "the poet of Memory"; and held a secure place among contemporary writers. By the time he had settled in London (in 1803) not even the *Lyrical Ballads* had as yet dimmed his lustre. Campbell had imitated both his title and his rhythm in *The Pleasures of Hope*. Romanticism was still struggling—through the cool reception accorded to *Thalaba*, the obscurity of Coleridge, the limited success of Scott's German translations and *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Byron was still a boy—at Harrow. From Rogers's momentary position of nearly-unrivalled fame neither the Lake School nor the Cockney School could dislodge him. Wealth, wit, power, and affiliation with Lord and Lady Holland, the champions of Whig policy and eighteenth



century classicism, held him in an almost imperial position at Holland House—in a sort of embalmed glory.<sup>1</sup> In 1814 Byron draws a triangle indicating his own version of the *gradus ad Parnassum*:



But the tide of Romanticism is irresistibly against him in these first of years of the new century; and, in spite of Byron's praise, the year 1814 holds for Rogers an ambiguous aspect: in France, at Auxerre, a learned professor salutes him as the first poet of the age; but A. W. von Schlegel in the same year, in Paris, conversing with Madame de Staël and Benjamin Constant, damns him with faint praise: "Rogers is the only poet of the old school."

Nevertheless his poetry continued to hold a certain public until well into the later years of the century. He was a favorite author

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<sup>1</sup>Of the triple epithet which Byron fashioned for Rogers's—"Beau, bard and banker",—the first term was scarcely appropriate. Its only claim to truth was the popularity of *The Pleasures of Memory* "among the ladies". There was little of the dandy about Rogers, in the Regency sense of the term; his manners and his general bearing were considered quaintly old-fashioned and "eighteenth-century-ish" by many of his friends in the last years of his life. Although he never married he seems to have regretted his decision to live alone. His attitude toward women was more or less formally sentimental, though there is an almost Brummelian letter from him to Maria Edgeworth in which he writes, "I am just now embarking, not for Alexandria, not for Constantinople, nor for Jerusalem, but for Paris, and I am all alone. Now, if you had your wishing cap, we might go together, and how delightful it would be." This was in 1843. Considering his unhandsome face, the extent of his possibilities as a "beau" may be imagined, in spite of this playfully challenging letter, by any imaginative reader.

of Mrs. Browning. Ruskin wrote to him that he had found renewal and sustenance in *Italy*. Scott wrote humbly and hopefully to him for a short poem to place in his *Minstrelsy*, certain of adding prestige to the book. Additional weight was lent his work by his reputation for poetic integrity. It was known that he spent fourteen years writing *Columbus*, only to have it pounced upon by the *Quarterly* and championed by his readers. He frequently noted that Wordsworth wrote too much, and that he himself spent more time and travail over a distich than Wordsworth spent over a third of the *Prelude*. Still another reason for his fame was the amazing amounts of money he lavished on the publication of his poems. When in 1828 the second part of *Italy* fell still-born from the press because the younger poets were at last making themselves felt, he "made a bonfire" of the unsold copies and determined on an illustrated edition that should sell in spite of shifts in taste. With nearly staggering prodigality he paid the best English artists—Turner, Flaxman, Stothard, Goodall, Wallis, Daniel, Findon—to aid in bringing out the best possible edition of *Italy*. Ten thousand copies of it appeared in 1830, at a cost of 7,335£. Within three years the edition had disappeared and brought in a profit. The publication was hailed as a marked event in the history of art. The drawing by Flaxman, the thirty-five by Stothard, the thirty-three by Turner, and the numerous well-executed engravings by other hands were regarded as a great step in a greater introduction of the public to the world of both art and poetry. Rogers's next act was equally bold: he brought out a similar edition of his *Poems*, with the same results.

Meanwhile his acid wit sparkled and hissed at innumerable breakfasts. In 1831 Macaulay found him "the oracle of the circle" at Holland House, where even the difficult Lady Holland, with her "Queen Elizabeth airs", bowed before his word, and where he alone was a free man when she was about. He could stand with his back to the chimney-piece without being told by her to stir the fire; other men, including Lord Holland, could not. The only uncertain moments came when Sydney Smith arrived. No party can support two wits at once, at least when one is as fragile as Rogers and the other as explosive and magnetic as Sydney Smith. Conversation appeared to bubble and

scintillate as if it rose irresistibly to magic tongues. But the members of this charmed circle knew better. They knew that every wit among them had prepared his "speeches". One gentleman had once seen on another's desk the notes for a conversation which the latter was preparing to toss nonchalantly upon his friends that evening. There was nothing false in this; it was the mode: one read books, recorded good stories, clever remarks, and criticisms in order to throw one's own contribution into the genial and sparkling flow of conversation. Regard for each other's feelings was not one of the cardinal rules of the game. What were Landseer's feelings when he expressed to Rogers his gratitude for the poet's praise of his picture of a Newfoundland dog, and got in reply, "Yes, I thought the ring on the dog's collar well painted"? What were the feelings of the author who presented Rogers with a copy of his work and asked him if he were looking at the contents, and got in reply, as Rogers pointed to the list of subscribers, "No, the discontents"?

But he was at his wickedest when amusing a party by satirizing one of its absent members. At the end of the evening his guests all sought to be the last to leave, in order to forestall the usual acid jokes about those who had just departed, by those who lingered with their host. "Come," said he when one of his dinner guests had just left, "now let us feather honest A—." Whereupon he drew such a ludicrous description of him that all present jumped up, exclaiming, "Let us all go together, and not allow ourselves to be dissected in detail." On the other hand, he charmed his company by the choice of his anecdotes: for example, the story of Adam Smith leaving a party of his friends, saying, "I love your company, gentlemen, but I believe I must leave you—to go to another world"; and of his dying a few hours later, after having burnt sixteen volumes in manuscript on Jurisprudence because he had a mean opinion of posthumous publications. There was also the story of Lord Lauderdale saying to Sheridan, "I should like to use that story of yours", upon which Sheridan replied, "Then I must be on my guard in future, for a joke in your hands is no laughing matter". On the whole, he was well understood, and although many were enraged at his witticisms they almost invariably returned to his drawing-room; for there was an impartiality about his "feathering" that gave all guests much in

common and took most of the personal sting away. "They tell me I say ill-natured things," he observed to Sir Henry Taylor in the quiet way of which Sydney Smith usually took too great advantage with noisy mirth. "I have a very weak voice; if I did not say ill-natured things no one would hear what I said."

Moreover, one can afford to express delicate malice about one's acquaintances if one is a munificent friend, or a sort of Maecenas. Campbell defended him by saying, "Borrow 500£ from him and he will never say a word against you until you want to repay him." Rogers's generosity rescued many of his literary friends from the pinch of circumstances: it saved Sheridan from being removed by bailiffs from his death-bed; it helped Moore in his Bermudan difficulties; it enabled Campbell to invest 500£ in stock; it reconciled Jeffrey and Moore, Moore and Byron, Parr and Mackintosh; it aided Moxon to set up his publishing house; it aided Richard Cumberland in his numerous predicaments; it procured for Wordsworth (whose poetry he wanted to re-write) the post of distributor of stamps; secured a pension for shy and troubled Cary, the translator of Dante; helped Ugo Foscolo and Sir Henry Taylor through numerous trying situations; introduced Byron to Holland House (though it brought about the suppression of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*); supplied financial advice to Coleridge (whom he thought mad) and to Wordsworth; and sped young Macaulay on his way by what he rarely gave, a compliment. From these acts he no doubt drew a kind of creative satisfaction. On two occasions, however, there must have been a savory ironic pleasure for such a palate as his. When on the death of Southey, Wordsworth accepted the Laureateship, the new Laureate found himself unable to afford Court dress; whereupon Rogers gladly squeezed the bigger man into his own snug clothes. In 1850, when Wordsworth's death left the position again open, and when Rogers himself declined to accept it, he once more drew out the Court dress and fitted it upon Alfred Tennyson. There must have been a twinkle in the old man's eyes and a dry wrinkled smile on his face when he saw his clothes returning to Windsor Palace.

One of Rogers's special characteristics was the passion for collecting, in which he showed discerning taste and great versatility. For he sought not merely *objets d'art* among which to live his



days of satisfied desires, but moments and memories as well. Among the "collector's items" in his rooms were the manuscripts of Sterne's sermons and Gray's poems and the agreement between Milton and Samuel Simmons the publisher (April 27, 1667), for the copyright of *Paradise Lost*, glazed and hung upon the wall. There was Roubiliac's clay model for a bust of Pope, by whose side Rogers's father had stood while the artist worked; there was a sketch by Raphael; there were coins, gems, figurines; there were the best books by the best authors in the best bindings. But among the memories, perhaps more precious to him than all these, was that when he stood in Voltaire's chamber at Ferney and thought of Madame Chatelet; the "five minutes such as I never felt before", in Rousseau's house; the occasion when Crabbe, "delighted at having three thousand pounds in his pocket", could not be prevailed upon to bank them but insisted on "taking them down to show to his son John". He writes ecstatically to Richard Sharp, "Oh, if you know what it is to look upon a lake Virgil has mentioned...to see a house in which Petrarch has lived, and to stand upon Titian's grave as I have done, you would instantly pack up and join me." On a visit to William Beckford, he listened to his host read from the manuscript of *Vathek*, and slept "in a bedroom which was approached through a gallery where lights were burned all night, and where there was an illuminated picture of St. Antonio, to which it was reported that Beckford sometimes said his prayers." The collector's point of view, in this double sense, is seen throughout *Italy*, a poetical guide-book to that country, describing the land and retelling its legends and memorable events.

The literary tastes of such a nature are naturally conservative. Rogers, like many of his friends, thought *Childe Harold* doomed to failure for its unprecedented cynicism, violence, and bitterness. He considered the beauty of *Christabel* hopelessly beyond his comprehension. He preferred Schiller to Goethe because the latter failed to "raise the feelings of the reader", though both poets "contained something Satanic". Of Dickens's *Christmas Carol* he said there was "no wit in putting bad grammar into the mouths of all his characters, and showing their vulgar pronunciation by spelling 'are' 'air'..." He wanted *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews* Bowdlerized for the family circle. In his



later years he observed plaintively, "Except science, nothing is now written with care." Of Wordsworth's blank verse he thought well, but averred that Crowe's was "very perfect". His allegiance was to the eighteenth century, to Gray and Goldsmith, Pope and Johnson, to Beattie's *Minstrel*; he never passed Dryden's house in Gerrard Street without removing his hat. Later he liked Cowper. Thus though he lived through the length of the Romantic generation, though he associated intimately and almost creatively with its greatest poets, he remained to the end a lover of the older tradition, his head filled with the mild witchery of Goldsmith's music, his courtesy and his elegance gently lingering into the broad blazing day of Macaulay.

Rogers's last years were full of "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends". His house was the gathering place for nearly all English and American men of note. From America came Longfellow, Sumner, Bancroft, Cooper, Irving, Melville, Webster. He outlived all the major poets of the Romantic school; only Leigh Hunt, Landor, and Barry Cornwall survived him. He was still a "dean among poets", though he knew that his poetry had suffered an eclipse. To the last, however, he kept up his correspondence, and made his usual journeys to Broadstairs for an interlude of quiet, stopping at Canterbury, where in the cathedral the verger always asked him what anthem he would like. In spite of his cadaveric thinness he was remarkably vigorous at eighty-six, when his leg was broken in an accident while he was walking, as was his custom, to his house after a party some distance away. Thereafter, for the six remaining years of his life he was wheeled about in a chair, his wit and his faculties as lively as ever. In these last years, after the sting of Byron's satiric lines on him had healed, the name which Byron had once joyfully applied to him was now doubly applicable—"Tithonus". The death of Sydney Smith, who had called him "the departed", had already given that phrase its own peculiar irony. The more Rogers aged the more attenuated he became. His final years brought out increasingly his physical ugliness and still more increasingly his fame as a wit. The latter, by a curious twist which rumor often takes, assumed impossible proportions, so that "from the Antipodes to the Orkneys", from Hindostan to Canada, he became the god-father to nearly all the bad jokes in existence. "Quashee,

who knows nothing of Newton or Milton, grins knowingly at the name of the illustrious banker, and exclaims, 'Him dam funny, dat Sam'."

He died quietly on December 18, 1855, in the house where for fifty-two years he had fed the greatest men of his time with delectable food and saline wit. With him passed away the last attempt at a skilful ventriloquism which might bring back the voice of Goldsmith. He left behind him the fragrance of eighteenth century elegance, the memory of graceful dilettanteism and insolent *bon mots*, of generous dinners and breakfasts for the exhilaration of men whose work was to outlive his own.

CHARLES FREDERICK HARROLD.

Ypsilanti, Michigan.

### ARRHENIUS TO THE PHANTOMS THAT SURROUNDED HIM

How did ye learn to hate what ye live by  
And grow to love what ye may never have?  
Prince, why do you sometimes wish you were a slave?  
Beggar, why do you long for regality?  
Oh mortal, doomed to heaviness and earth,  
How have the dove and swallow torn your eye!  
Why do ye sigh with angry jealousy  
When the black and yellow butterfly flits by?

Do ye not yearn for shadow, ye who must run  
Forever, sweatingly, in the glare of the sun  
And ye, whom forests feed, dream of the sea,  
While ye, sung to by waves, think of the mirth  
Of laughing trees, chattering in the sunlight  
Or whispering in the stillness of the night?

MERRILL MOORE.

## AN AMERICAN REMEMBERS OXFORD

The old Oxonian who starts to recollect finds a strange conflict in his recollections. On the one hand, he recalls the Oxford of work; on the other, the Oxford of play. On the one hand is the imposing and venerable university of higher standards, perhaps, than any other in the world; on the other hand is the Oxford of "young barbarians all at play". And he hesitates to choose between these conflicting aspects until he realizes that the conflict itself is of the essence of Oxford. Someone, referring to the grim antiquity of the college walls and to the ever-recurring generations of youth that come to dwell within those walls, has recorded his dominant impression of Oxford in Tennysonian language as that of "immortal age beside immortal youth". Whatever may be the adage about "crabbed age and youth", there was surely never a finer example of the successful co-existence of mature wisdom with youthful irresponsibility. It is Oxford's unique distinction that in the infinite variety of her life and interests she has found a way to reconcile these two extremes, to co-ordinate work and play and in some mysterious fashion to direct them toward the goal of a true education. Most Oxford pastimes have an intellectual flavor, while in her academic work she manages so to arouse intellectual interest and curiosity as to secure for it the impetus of play. Not a little of the strength of Oxford consists in this union so subtly, so effectively achieved by the spirit of the place.

But not always is the reminiscence of the Oxonian so definite and orderly. Rather there flashes through his mind a gorgeous profusion, a profuse jumble of memory-images. Perhaps his first is the physical beauty of the city, with its grim colleges, their lawns and gardens of velvet green, its stately streets, especially the curving grace of "the High", and all the fair panorama of rivers and playing-fields. And while visualizing all this, he will murmur with Matthew Arnold:

And that sweet city with her dreaming spires,  
She needs not June for beauty's heightening,  
Lovely all times, she lies . . .

All the same, if he is a true Oxonian he will visualize Oxford in the summer term, in late May or early June, when trees, vines, and flowers are all out, when everything is bathed in sunlight, when there is gaiety and color and life about its sometime sombre streets, when the age-old university furnishes a background so richly beautiful for all the pageantry of college youth. At such a time one's recollection saunters from the austerer beauty of the colleges themselves to the green and gold and white of playing fields, where cricket and tennis enjoy their spring-time rivalry; to the strenuous lower Isis of the "summer eights" lined with barges, bloods, and beauties; or to the sweet tranquility of the upper Cherwell, where supine upon the cushions of a punt one holds but does not read a book, thinking of nothing or of everything, lapped in a pagan luxury of existence.

But Oxford is a university, not a lotos-land, and the Oxonian is recalled to meditate upon the strange spectacle of its twenty-odd colleges and the university which is their sum, or rather more than their sum. But how may the relation of college to university be explained? More or less as our central government is to its "sovereign" states, so is the university to its constituent colleges. The college provides for the life of the student and for his tutorial instruction; the chief function of the university is that of an examining body. These statements are true, but they are hopelessly inadequate. The relation cannot be simply explained. Go to Oxford and live for many years and you may understand it—or you may not.

The academic side of Oxford is equally inexplicable. It almost seems that Stephen Leacock is right, that by going to one's tutor and being smoked at for an hour each week, one departs at the end of, say, three years, an educated man. True, the conscientious Oxonian has attended a few lectures during that time. But the typical Oxonian is not conscientious during term time, and takes his lectures very lightly if he takes them at all. During vacation he may condescend to do some solid work, but the many interests of the university city leave him time enough only to satisfy his tutor by the preparation of a weekly essay. He is at Oxford to imbibe inspiration, to breathe an atmosphere, to be stimulated by all the manifold intellectual and social interests of the great university city.

Therefore he enters with enthusiasm into the various clubs and discussion groups so typical of Oxford—groups social, political, philosophical, literary, and what not. He joins the Union and listens to speeches in the typical Oxford manner, bristling with epigrams if a trifle beside the point. Upon occasion such men as Asquith, Lloyd-George, and Ramsay Macdonald take part in the Union debates, defending the policies of their respective parties against the assaults of undergraduates. The informal group is an even more grateful recollection. Some distinguished visitor is generally present; and, in the open discussion which follows the talk of the evening, undergraduates make their contributions to the subject and eagerly pit their wits against the distinguished visitor's. An Oxford discussion group is no respecter of persons, though it profoundly appreciates real knowledge, ability, and fair play in discussion. For this reason most of the visitors who are justly distinguished—men like Gilbert Murray, Bertrand Russell, Walter de la Mare, John Masefield, H. G. Wells, to name only a few—are usually able to hold their own in its quick-witted give and take, its searching method of direct question and answer in discussion.

And there is the still more informal group of friends who assemble in one another's rooms to read plays, to criticize each other's poetry, to discuss the problems of philosophy. Oxford is full of such groups, perhaps unknown to any save their members but contributing richly to the stream of Oxford life.

Social life at Oxford varies all the way from these groups of serious friends to the devil-may-care drinking club and the noisy exuberance of a college "bump-supper". The Oxford of term-time is an extremely sociable place. A full day would start with a breakfast party in the rooms of some friend. Breakfast is a favorite time for entertaining at Oxford. Perhaps one would, perhaps not, have time for a lecture or a little work before bicycling to the rooms of another friend for lunch. There is not much loafing over lunch, for one must be out on the athletic field soon afterward to uphold the honor of the college in Rugby, soccer, hockey, cricket, tennis, or perhaps down on the river for a stiff row or a race in the college boat. Then, after a bath and change comes the high festival of tea. From their scattered fields all loyal sons of Oxford gather about some tea-table or other and imbibe unbelievable quantities of the delectable beverage. For



an hour or more proceeds the uninterrupted flow of tea and talk at this most characteristic of Oxford gatherings. Most of the poetic feasts and high philosophizings take place at tea-time, under the pleasant stimulation of the tea-cup and its accompanying food, so welcome after exercise. A brief interval, then one must put on academic gown for a late dinner in the college hall, presided over by the dons at high table, and inaugurated with the solemnity of a Latin grace. Groups of friends loaf over coffee or port in the common room before dispersing to the business of the evening, which is more than apt to be some meeting or other, but may be a theatre, bridge, a quiet talk with friends over the port glasses or even—O rare contingency!—an evening of reading by one's own fireside.

But Oxford is not merely a place for the frittering away of time in exaggerated sociability. He who thinks that knows not Oxford, has caught nothing of its spirit. Its sociability is not mere sociability. At these gatherings assemble young men keenly interested in things of the mind and prepared to discuss them in a natural unpedantic way, lightened with those flashes of humor and epigram so dear to the Oxonian's heart. Is not this a species of education infinitely superior to the dull grinding over books so frequently confused with the attaining of "culture"? Not that the Oxonian neglects the solid basis of work and effort. In his vacations he accomplishes an amount of reading and a kind of reading that would make the average American collegian shudder. And he knows that at the end of his course he must measure up to a standard very exacting indeed. In the standard of its final honours examinations Oxford need fear the challenge of no other university whatsoever.

To give any adequate idea of the Oxford curriculum, volumes would be needed. But it may be well to point out one or two essential ways in which the Oxford system differs from our own.

Perhaps the most fundamental difference is that at Oxford specialization begins at an early stage and continues throughout the course. For the Oxford B. A. is given in a single subject rather than in all knowledge conveniently defined as sixty session-hours chosen from certain air-tight compartments known as "groups." The American scatters his efforts over many fields, the Oxford man limits his study to one subject and its related branches. The

Oxford B. A. is a degree *either* in History *or* in Chemistry *or* in English Literature, not in all these combined and others besides.

The most characteristic feature of the Oxford system is the distinction between "pass" and "honors" work. Oxford offers to students who wish to read for honors an entirely different curriculum from that required of students who are content with passing, and this separation takes place at every stage of Oxford examination—at the entrance, intermediate, and final examinations of the university for the B. A. degree. It is interesting to note that this "honors idea" is spreading rapidly in American colleges, some forty-four of which are now offering honors courses of one sort or another. The idea emanates from Oxford.

But the great reputation of Oxford in academic circles is due, as much as to anything else, to the high standard of its final honors "schools." Final honors examinations at Oxford are much more august phenomena than any of the glorified tests with which the American college student is periodically confronted. Our little examinations are a sort of academic itch recurring every three months, to be met without anxiety by a little hasty scratching among books and lecture notes. Oxford final schools are a crisis of great moment, a period of intellectual child-birth, when in labour and prolonged effort, the student must bring forth the fruits of his long mating with Oxford life. This cluster of nine or a dozen examinations taken in six days is the far-off event, divine at least in its augustness, toward which his whole creation has been moving for at least two years. Little college tests ("collegas"), to be sure, there have been, to test whether or not he was prepared for the major ordeal of "Schools". But they had counted for nothing, were, indeed, only private affairs between himself and his tutor. This is the be-all and the end-all here, when all the world is to be let into the secret of his academic standing.

It has been said that, in contrast to our American Phi Beta Kappa and other academic honors here, the highest honors at Oxford go not to the mediocre man who has worked very hard, nor to the brilliant man who has worked moderately hard, but only to the brilliant man who has also worked hard. The Oxford student has no class grade to fall back upon in case of need. Nor has he experienced accommodating professors whose lectures have already given him in exact form the answers

to his examination questions. Indeed his papers are set by examiners who have had nothing to do with tutoring him or lecturing to him. All that he knows is the general subject in which he is to be examined and the university statute outlining the scope of the examination. With this information and his tutor's assistance he reads and works out his own salvation. He is not spoon-fed out of easy text-books; he is sent to the original documents and the most authoritative works to dig for himself. Final honors work at Oxford is strong meat, not meant for babes, or morons.

The American Oxonian is somewhat at a disadvantage academically, for he is greatly tempted to spend his vacations not in work but in travel upon the Continent. And who will criticize him for this? The opportunity for well-considered travel, not of the hasty tourist variety, is one of the greatest advantages of the Rhodes Scholarships, and is of admitted educational value. Dull would be he of soul who could rest supinely in one spot, even such a spot as Oxford, with all the panorama of Europe spread before him, luring him away. Oxford's generous vacations (six weeks at Christmas, six weeks at Easter, four months in the summer) and favorable exchanges make the call of the Continent one that may not be denied. Perhaps the first vacation will be spent in England; after that the Rhodes Scholar makes the acquaintance of some new country each vacation, or returns to some spot that has taken his fancy—Paris, the Riviera, the Tyrol, Italy—away from the bleak English winter and the monotony of English food. Part of Oxford term-time is spent in making plans, in reading up, and in choosing companions for the trip of the next vacation. Sometimes he visits English friends; certainly he finds time to "do" the British Isles pretty thoroughly, sojourning in London, bicycling through Devon and Cornwall, settling in the English Lake district, visiting the Highlands and the West Coast of Scotland, with perhaps a taste of Ireland. So for three years the Rhodes Scholar is a lord of creation; for though his stipend is not princely, he has mastered the art of traveling and living inexpensively. He returns to Oxford refreshed and full of his travels, to regale tea-parties of his friends with a choice selection from his varied experiences.

There are many things in Oxford which seem strange to the American student, from the proctors and "bull-dogs" going their

nightly rounds in search of undergraduate malefactors, to the services in the Varsity church conducted throughout in Latin, sermon and all. There are the quaint but annoying restrictions of the colleges that no student may go out of college after 9:15 P.M.; if one has gone out after that time he must pay a fine, graduated according to the lateness of the hour, on his return; and if he is not in college before twelve o'clock he is apt to be "sent-down". This, after the complete freedom of an American university, comes a little hard, if it were not also a trifle ridiculous. Still, there is at Oxford nothing so ridiculously humiliating to the student as our American practice of roll-call at lectures, which is our corresponding way of making sure that the student is enjoying the benefits of university residence.

There are many interesting and amusing relics of the mediaeval university at Oxford. The statutes still forbid the carrying of bows and arrows in the High Street and the playing of marbles on the steps at Queen's College, and now and then, on such occasions as Guy Fawkes night, Armistice night, or a Varsity "rag", one sees some faint revival of the Town and Gown hostility of the Middle Ages. So in every aspect of Oxford life tradition is God, but even the most iconoclastic American bows to Oxford tradition either of necessity or remembering in awe that Oxford was a university three hundred years before America was discovered.

Life at Oxford is decidedly monastic according to our American standards. Although there are four women's colleges, and although women have recently been granted full degree privileges, Oxford is still a man's university. All the fine old colleges in the centre of the city are for men only; women are tolerated on the outskirts of the city in new and unlovely red-brick structures. The average undergraduate in his cloistered academe, if he thinks of the "undergraduate" at all, thinks of her only as a pest. He regards himself as a distinctly superior being, and the authorities would seem to agree with him in this. It is said that the strict regulations governing the conduct of women students at Oxford were passed not in the interests of the women, but to shelter and protect the men from the wiles and intrusions of the feminine. And this, as G. B. S. would agree, is as it should be. At all events, Oxford takes its coeducation philosophically and mildly,



relegating the feminine to the limbo of its geography and of its thought. Though women are present in some numbers, Oxford is still distinctly a haunt of masculinity.

The American at Oxford has the opportunity of meeting many types of men previously unknown to him. Oxford is easily the most cosmopolitan university in the world. Few and inconspicuous are the corners of the earth unrepresented in its student body. The British Empire alone accounts for much of this cosmopolitanism, with its Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians, South Africans, Indians, negroes from West Africa, and countless others. There is also a goodly sprinkling of non-British foreigners, with Americans heading the list and all European countries well represented. This gives a peculiar significance to the Oxford International Assembly and a truly international color to Oxford life.

But to the new American the native Englishman is an object sufficiently strange to be the mark of his first curiosity. Perhaps the most intriguing Oxford type is the "aesthete" (pronounced *eeethete* in Oxford). The aesthete had until recently no parallel in the average American college; the hardy sons of pioneers would tolerate no such nonsense. But now one can detect in the more sophisticated American college the appearance of these beauty-loving souls who in their dress, manners, room-decorations, and reading give evidence of their aesthetic philosophy of life. In Oxford the type thrives upon the Wildean tradition, everywhere proclaiming in act and in word that Beauty is God and Oscar Wilde her Prophet. The followers of this cult are generally delicate and sensitive youths who often fare badly at the hands of their heartier brethren, especially on the occasion of a bump-supper, when notorious aesthetes are taken into the centre of the college quadrangle and there ducked in the fountain or subjected to the supreme humiliation of "de-bagging". But Oxford tolerates a certain amount of aestheticism—is congenial to it, in fact—and few of these amateur practitioners go to Wildean lengths. Much of it is quite harmless, and not a little of it pose.

It is easy to spot the Oxford aesthete. He is immaculate and delicately perfumed; his flannel trousers are of a very light grey; if he wears a purple tie he carries a bright yellow book under his arm, or vice versa, and a gaily flowered silk handkerchief protrudes



from his breast pocket; his hair is long and slicked into place; all told, he is one who would

...walk down Piccadilly  
With a poppy or a lily

as naturally as you or I would carry the most ordinary bundle along that thoroughfare. But to be seen properly the aesthete must be visited in the congenial environment of his own rooms. There are deep rugs, rich hangings, exotic futurist paintings (perhaps done by himself), nude statuary and other ornaments, and everywhere a color scheme subtle or striking, according to the taste of the owner. One remembers a tea party given in such rooms by such an aesthete. A basket full of whole lemons was passed around, and when each guest had taken one, some bold spirit inquired of the host what the lemons were for. "Oh", replied the host, "just hold them; they're so decorative". It was this same person who dashed from his bed in agony when he suddenly realized that his silk pajamas clashed with the wallpaper of his bedroom, and not daring to return to that room for another pair, spent an uncomfortable night on the couch in his sitting-room! But this petty aestheticism is not the whole story. The best type of aesthete has a genuine, if somewhat showy, love for art in all its forms—music, painting, sculpture, poetry, the drama—and perhaps himself contributes to one or more of these arts in a manner not to be despised.

The average Oxford Englishman is, of course, not an aesthete but a normal fellow like the American student, though a little more carefully selected on social or intellectual grounds. The Rhodes Scholar, when he has recovered from a tendency to laugh at the strange accent and when he has adjusted himself to the customs of Oxford, is surprised to learn how very similar he is to his English brother. The differences are superficial; in essentials they are close kin. Unapproachable at first, the Englishman warms up on closer acquaintance. The Rhodes Scholar who takes the trouble can make about as many English friends as he wants. It is a matter of individuality, not of nationality.

Oxford is, after all, an atmosphere, a spirit, a state of mind, not a mere university, and the reminiscing Oxonian is apt to close his rambling reverie with some of the catchwords of Matthew

Arnold, still the finest interpreter of the spirit of Oxford. For a moment let Matthew Arnold speak:

We in Oxford, brought up amidst the beauty and sweetness of that beautiful place, have not failed to seize one truth—the truth that beauty and sweetness are essential characters of a complete human perfection. When I insist on this, I am all in the faith and tradition of Oxford.

Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene! . . . Steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantment of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection—to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? . . . Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who hast given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistines! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! . . . Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against the Philistines, compared with the warfare which this queen of romance has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone!

These and similar passages are what Swinburne delighted to call Arnold's "effusive Oxonolatry", but to the glamorous imagination of the old Oxonian they are but faint praise, albeit more nearly adequate than any words which he himself can supply.

What wonder if after being a part of all this for three years the returned Rhodes Scholar feels that somehow there has passed away a glory from the earth? Like Childe Harold done with pilgrimaging; like Ulysses, far-traveled, much-enduring man, rusting unburnished in his native Ithaca; like Millamant dwindled into a wife; the Colossus of Rhodes, once lord of creation and leader of men, from breathing the serene upper air of Oxford, dwindles into the obscurity of some profession, perhaps even the deeper obscurity of teaching! It is something of course, to find this obscurity in the cherished neighborhood of the University of Virginia, in so many spiritual respects America's nearest approach to Oxford, in beauty not inferior. Three years ago the Oxford Virginian, somewhat piqued at Oxford's specialized

training of "Greats" men and recalling with pleasure student days at Virginia, inscribed these lines "To Two Beloved":

Oh, Oxford many-pinnaced I love,  
Her quiet rivers, tennis greens and teas;  
But, O Virginia, still how far above  
I prize thy colonnades and lawns and trees!

Virginia, where a man is more than mind,  
You come, I think, some nearer to the truth;  
And what more beauty dare man hope to find  
Than your white-pillared paradise of youth?

When Oxford puts her summer beauty on,  
Then, my first-love Virginia, to whom  
But thee can I compare her, and thy Lawn  
Where honeysuckle and wistaria bloom?

But human nature is a thing preverse, ever dreaming of what it may not have. And as the spirit of the Virginia Oxonian yearned for Virginia, so the Oxford Virginian harks back in memory and in longing to days beside the Isis and the Cher.

ARTHUR KYLE DAVIS, JR.

University of Virginia.

#### OF THE EARTH, EARTHY

I shall be lonely in high heaven for squills,  
And for sweet rain my soul will suffer rack.  
Cold jewels will not comfort me, nor trills  
Of choiring angels. Yearning ever back  
To earth, I shall peer down the pallid hills  
In search of the lost moon; and weary lack  
Of the beech-glade where my beloved rills  
Walk with me now, will shadow heaven to black.

Nor would I that my shivering ghost upreach  
To realms where naked will must act alone.  
I shrink from thoughts too high for mortal speech.  
And the chill melodies that have no tone,  
I would live only where our sun is shining,  
And yield me to the dusk at his declining.

ALICE FREDA BRAUNLICH.

## PATRIOTISM AND FRIED CHICKEN

One of the sweetest comforts which can come to a man who has made his retreat from the real, and withdrawn into some Ivory Tower, is to hear somewhere an echo of one of his cherished sentiments. His pleasure is increased, when, so far as his cherished sentiment is concerned, he is "in partibus infidelium". Such comfort is like the voice which the Arab hears on a blue and starlit night, coming over waste and sands from the minaret of a mosque. These, at least, were my thoughts when I came upon this delicious tid-bit in a review of Brillat-Savarin's noble work, *The Physiology of Taste*:

Someday, I comfort myself, I shall taste a nightingale's tongue dipped in honey and be delivered from this abominable fried chicken... How can Southerners who are experts in the fine art of living be so satisfied with the detestable routine of their negro cooks?

These are brave words, and I could wish to have had the courage and the art to utter them first! A man in the South who ventures to tell the truth about Southern cooking exposes himself to no end of danger. It is true that an outsider's inability to appreciate our cooking is sometimes taken as a matter of course, and is merely pitied, but a Southerner who comes to question the superiority of Southern cooking is more pitied, as the turn-coat is more despised than the enemy. So I have been content to eat and to praise, though all the while my poor stomach longed for the days when nationalism was an unknown thing, and a man might eat what he pleased without impugning his patriotism. For patriotism, which Dr. Johnson with much perspicacity defined as the last refuge of scoundrels, is indeed the root of this evil.

Henry Grady once said something to the effect that the Ark of the Republic was to be found in the homes of humble citizens. I can locate it more definitely than he; it is in the kitchens. Do I not remember with what sorrow I first heard when a child that Roosevelt, who was then touring the South, asked to be delivered



from this abominable fried chicken! It seemed to me then that the South's cup of humiliation was full, and I hated him for preferring ham to chicken. It is incredible how our love of fried chicken is bound up with our love of country. To disparage fried chicken is to disparage the thrill which comes when the band plays "Dixie", or the elusive tenderness which comes at the sight of an old Confederate flag. I could almost wish that I had never eaten of the tree of gastronomic knowledge.

Alas, what Emerson said of the conditions of literary success, that they are "almost destructive of the best social power", might be amended to prove that the possession of a nice palate is incompatible with a "100 per cent" patriotism. Who said that he could never fight the French because they wrote such beautiful prose? The regrettable part of it is not that I could never fight the French, but only that I have come to seem less patriotic as my taste for Southern cooking has been replaced by a preference for the French. If nationality would only stay out of one's private life! I remember a zealous American missionary who wanted it made one of the conditions of being an American that one not smoke or drink. Under the regime which she sought to establish only good people could be Americans. If a man loved the weed or looked upon wine when it was red, he would summarily lose his American citizenship. How one longs, as I said before, for more tolerant days.

I grant it is an odd thing to hear a Southerner talking in this fashion. Travel may explain it. Indeed, travel among alien men, tempered by a mild metaphysical bent, has ever been man's greatest stimulus in the achieving of ripe knowledge. Now, I have been twice abroad. The first time was with the American Expeditionary Forces in France, and our food on that expedition was supplied for the most part by the American quartermaster. I remember what a demand we Southerners made for the inclusion of sweet potatoes on the Army's bill of fare, and I remember, too, trying, years later, to explain to an Englishman just how a sweet potato tastes. We got very little French food on that Odyssey; we were restricted to what was offered by tiny French



villages in war-time. Yet how often have "mon copain" and I bought from some local boucher a likely looking piece of meat, taken it to some amiable dame in the village, and asked, in perfect college French: "Madame, voulez-vous bien faire la cuisine pour nous?" Our only concern on such occasions was to make sure the butcher had not sold us horse meat.

It was on my second trip that maturity was attained. Circumstance took me this time to Syria, a paradise if you love fried foods. In the midst of this grease it was my good luck to have the most perfect cook in the East, an Egyptian trained in Paris. He knew how to avoid the defects of Syrian cooking, and to turn to good account what the country afforded. Under his tutelage I came to appreciate good cooking, but somehow I was not yet aware of it. That awareness, sadly enough, was to come as a challenge to my most intimate prejudices.

One day Mr. Lothrop Stoddard, the great traveler who delights in studying the East, came to dine with me. During the dinner he casually called attention to the similarity between the ordinary Syrian cooking and the cooking in our own South. No sooner had he spoken than I was seized with a great heart-ache, for I realized at once the truth of what he said and my aversion to that sort of cooking. And I have come to know that the dualism of our nature is as nothing compared to the conflict between patriotism and palate.

To what odd contrasts and discrepancies the Elizabethan fever for exploration gave birth. Ripe men in a raw country. Speaking of literature alone, Lowell said:

However else our literature may avoid the payment of its liabilities, it can surely never be by a plea of infancy. Intellectually we were full grown at the start.

Well, without challenging Lowell by asking whether literature expresses sociological conditions as well as individual men, let us admit that gastronomically we were not full grown at the start. The cooking of a people, more than its literature, is dependent on physical conditions. Conditions in the beginning were certainly primitive, but the sad thing for the gourmet is that they have remained so. Consider our provincial *pièces de résistance*: fried chicken, cornbread, molasses, watermelon—what

a primitive society they connote. Can one not visualize the cabin in the clearing? It is only a step from cornpone and molasses to 'possum and bear meat. I must except the cantaloup. I do not know whether its Italian name makes me see it gastronomically *en rose*, but certainly it seems to me to be worthy of the most delicate palate.

But I am not happy in my perversion, nor is it complete. Even now when I eat fried chicken in an old house where a picture of Lee hangs in the drawing room, I feel like the Comte de Guiche in *Cyrano de Bergerac*. That good Gascon captain seemed to his men to have forgotten his native speech and manner when in a crisis he unbended, and exulting they said of him: "*Il vient d'avoir l'accent!*"

ABBOTT C. MARTIN.

The University of the South.

#### ICARUS; FRANCE 1917

I have been born many times and I have died  
Many times, in the sea named after me  
The water that cooled my sun-scorched arms was salty  
And begged me not to go but to abide  
And be a mer-man—there I might remain  
And swim in water as I would fly in air  
But the cloudy sky was to me twice as fair  
So as soon as I could I stole away again

And returned to earth. Late in the war I fell  
Out of a pit of the sky that was heaven's hell;  
My plane was burning; I remembered all  
My lives and more as I began to fall  
Then the wind howled by and stole my breath. . .  
In Madam's kitchen garden I dashed to death.

MERRILL MOORE.

## NARCISSUS IN DIXIE

### A YOUNG SOUTHERNER SHAKES HIS HEAD

Southern writers have in some measure risen to an occasion. They have assumed the role of social critics and have suggested, with mild imprecation, that the South is properly not concerned in developing a culture foreign to its racial genius; that it has elements of an individual civilization, not American but southern; that it has ideals, sentiments, and, above all, Traditions which are to be the basis of its spiritual development. Civilizations, they say, are autogenous. The South will come into its own, without outside aid.

Much, no doubt, that is encouraging comes from the pens of southern critics. They point, on the one hand, to the industrial development—a development which has always resulted in loosening the shackles of religious bigotry; and they mention with hope the South's educational activity and the growing spirit of liberality in the southern college. The critics are divided into two schools: those who welcome the industrial progress and certain of its attendant results—Edwin Mims, William J. Robertson, Grover C. Hall, and, to an extent, Gerald W. Johnson; and those designated the Higher Provincialists who would build on the traditions of the South a civilization immune to the northern infection—Stark Young, Donald Davidson, John C. Ransom.

These writers are not, perhaps, widely known. But they are intelligent men who have voiced the southern reply to northern criticism. They are, for the most part, literary students rather than sociologists or professional critics, and the fact that they have entered the field of controversy is a significant phase of the southern awakening. Casting aside its attitude of resentful aloofness, the South has begun to explain itself, to inquire into the sources of its strength and weakness, to define its proper line of development. The old attitude of stoic defense is gone. The South knows that there are enemies to face, and that these enemies are not without but are within. There are, to begin with, the Klan and lynchings, writes Gerald W. Johnson in *Scribner's* for March, 1925, "There are the illiteracy statistics. There is the

notorious artistic sterility of the region. There is its prevailing impermeability to ideas. There is its political Bourbonism."

Dangerous enemies are these, and the South has turned to face them. Not the whole South, mind you, or any considerable part of it. But some of the better minds of the section have become concerned with the South's future and have directed their attention to it. And they have prescribed with fair unanimity a line of development. I find it voiced most concisely by ex-Governor Hobby of Texas in a letter appearing in the August (1928) number of *The Forum*:

The South's problem, from the cultural standpoint, is to keep what is best of its traditions and customs; maintain its essentially conservative outlook; hold fast to its own ideas of racial autonomy; continue to emphasize individualism, even at the risk of being accused of intolerance; and on the other side of the ledger to squelch its reactionaries and flatten out the provincials whose self-righteousness is merely a cloak for ignorance and a mask behind which burns the same sort of zeal that captured Salem, Massachusetts, in the long ago.

The spirit of southern concern with itself is so praiseworthy that northern criticism, never widespread, has virtually disappeared. The South is left to its own leaders, and these, continuing to stress the South's deficiencies, reiterate the line of development suggested by ex-Governor Hobby—retention of traditions, customs, and conservative outlook; pursuance of native ideals in developing a separate and local civilization; and the concentration of effort in the attack on puritanism.

Yet stirrings of uneasiness fill me. Horatius, it is true, retained his armor when he swam the Tiber, although it was a wearisome load. But, then, Horatius was in a hurry, and besides he had not far to go. Questions arise. What southern traditions and customs are properly retainable? What precisely are the native lines of development southern critics speak of? Is the attack upon puritanism a sufficient ideal or incentive to motivate a people? Seriously I wonder whether southern critics have formulated with courage and wisdom a rational idea of growth and fulfilment; whether their conservatism is not a defensive motor reflex; whether in traditionalism there are not elements of re-

action; whether the South under the leadership of southern critics contains within itself the germs of its own release.

## II

My dissatisfaction with southern critics is occasioned, no doubt, by a feeling that they are bound by close ties of amity to the section. As regards their individual aspirations, there is nothing local to be discerned. For the most part they live the good life in relative seclusion, and are not immediately concerned with the interests and preoccupations of their neighbors. But the sub-conscious spirit of nativity guides their pens, and the censor issues the irrevocable *Thou Shalt Not*. These gentlemen if writing, for example, opinions on Castillian civilization would indicate rather plainly that a rich and fruitful civilization results only from aspiration and unified, unattainable ideals; that pride, especially family pride, and stoicism are conservative qualities not entirely compatible with the inquisitive spirit which fosters the life of the mind; that a failure to abandon mediaeval traditions resulted, in the end, in the decline of Spain. But this free and lofty treatment is not aspired to by southern critics when writing of their native realms. Sub-conscious warnings tell them that to point out the mote in a fellow-southerner's eye is an injury, a barbarism, an insult.

I must not be taken too literally. The southerner is not really concerned with criticisms of his locality which concern its puritanism, its illiteracy, its political corruption. Accusations of this nature only make him feel more strongly his personal superiority. Native critics hurl them forth with apparent bravery. But when you question the Code, when you oppose the conservative and reactionary tendencies cloaked under the name of southern traditions and customs—then you are in for it. The censor sounds its burglar-alarm.

What then is the Code? I shall try to formulate it with fairness.

- I. Thou shalt not disagree with thy neighbor upon any important ideas other than political. Especially thou shalt not mention any disturbing ideas thou hast read of in books. Think about them, if you will, but don't mention them.



2. Go to church or not as you please, but *don't* be 'advanced'.
3. The finest thing that can be said about a man is that he is a perfect gentleman, and about a woman that she is a perfect lady.
4. Your time is at the disposal of everybody. Be hospitable.

The Code is mentioned here because of its immense importance. Adherence to it is the dominant form of southern aspiration. The Higher Provincialists, therefore, are not without perspective in their desire to foster the local tendency. But the fostering process seems unrelated to any even remote goal of perfection, individual or sectional; and worse, the falling back upon the old South for inspiration appears to be merely a partisan reaction against northern criticism and dominance.

Stark Young in *The New Republic* for August 24, 1927, wrote as follows:

There is only one thing I can feel sure that the South needs and can strive for. And that is more thought about its own point of view. Not to take the boiler-plate thinking handed out all over the country by popular journalism and Washington and Rotary, not to stick hotly to intolerant defensive talk, not to withdraw into provincial sentiment; what the South can do is to think, think, think on its own tradition, its own culture—what there is left of it—its own social idea, its own conception of what society is and what civilization is. If we did that well, we might have hopes of preserving our own best needs, of changing what needs to be changed and developing what might be developed, and of giving it some plausibility of explanation in the face of the crass, oversimple ideas that we meet everywhere these days.

This is certainly not very helpful. Nor indeed do we find anything more constructive in comments of Donald Davidson, poet and professor, whose "First Fruits of Dayton" appeared in *The Forum* for June, 1928:

The South has been damned for its provincialism, but there never was a time when the South needed its provincialism more—if by provincialism we mean its heritage of individual character, the whole bundle of ways that make the South Southern. The South needs to keep its provincialism (it can be both detached and generous) if only as a balance against the feverish cosmopolitanism affected in some other sections.

Some little spirit of disunity and retirement might be a boon, as a refuge against the cruel conformity ordered by our always accelerating, standardizing civilization.

The South is asked to remold itself! In what image, then, and after what heart's desire? What problems are to be visited upon the South, what strikes, agitations, nervous retchings of society, wage slavery, graft, mountebankery, idiocies of merchant princes? No, give the South leave first to discover its virtues as other sections have discovered theirs. For the progress that comes through disruption and haste is not always a civilized thing.

Mr. Davidson sees bugaboos north of the Mason-Dixon line. He is, moreover, suspicious of the thing called European culture. And one wonders just whither the shade of General Lee would direct us.

John C. Ransom, also poet and professor, looks at the Old South with seeing eyes. In a lyrical diatribe on industrialism appearing in *THE SEWANEE REVIEW* for April, 1928, he evaluates its cultural tradition:

The arts of the section were not immensely passionate, creative and romantic; they were the eighteenth century arts of dress, conversation, manners, the table, the hunt, politics, oratory, the pulpit. These were arts of living and not arts of escape; they were also community arts in which every class of society could participate. The South took life easy, itself a tolerably comprehensive art.

Now leisure is, as Mr. Ransom rightly states, a very civilizing influence. If continued through sufficient generations it induces a state of mind receptive to the more advanced arts. And from rich soil the seeds of genius grow. Therefore, according to Mr. Ransom,

The benefit which the South can now render to the nation will consist in showing how an American community can really master the spirit of modern industrialism instead of capitulating to it; that is to say that it will remain Southern in its pure, traditional, even sectional sense.

Mr. Ransom's comments are interesting as revealing a philosophical attitude, but intrusions of reality dispel whatever tangible hopes his words may arouse. For leisure does not result in artistic productivity unless a state of mind impervious to the grosser

material interests is induced, and not even Mr. Ransom denies that the South has become largely middle-westernized:

Progress and Service are "ramping high" in the South today. The urban South has about capitulated to these novelties. It is the village South and the rural South which supply the resistance and it is fortunate from my point of view that these represent a vast quantity of inertia.

Now if the cities have capitulated to the doctrine of Success it is not wise to see hope in the resistance of the rural community. For the city is a monster not readily changed by the quality of food he devours, and the cities rule the world. Into the city comes the villager, but he does not seek to impose the village ideal. By gradual changes his external characteristics become urban, and his son sheds readily the spiritual vestiges of the rural community.

Furthermore, it seems fatuous to hope that the isolation and resistance of the Southern town or rural community will result in a lasting local good. The radio, picture show, syndicated press, magazine and automobile have destroyed in advance what might have been the fruitful results of passivity. The South has its full share of distractions.

And this resistance and inertia, this harking back to the virtues of the Old South—how has it affected the youth in the small local community? I see largely acquiescence, loss of hope, and frustration. I see that the best endowed of the young men disintegrate if they do not go away. They accomplish the local ideal, they fulfil the Code, and, this much of growth having been attained, they sicken like potted plants that have exhausted the soil.

### III

The older generation of southerner was sustained by hates and prejudices. And so is the present generation in the lower orders. But among the younger generation of the privileged classes the sense of ancient wrongs scarcely exists. The young men in the South today turn for sustenance to the dual doctrine of Success and the Code.

Now these doctrines are diverse and somewhat neutralizing; and it does not take a student of the human heart to tell that varied and contradictory aspiration is not good for the soul.

Here we begin to see the inadequacy of the southern critic. He has done little to get the southerner out of his dilemma; he has not advocated a doctrine which is helpful in the present exigency. The Higher Provincialists have told the southerner that he must not be like his northern neighbor. They have advised him to retain his traditions in advancing to some remote and indefinable regions which, after all, might be behind him. The "New South" advocates, on the other hand, have subscribed to an attack on puritanism, hate, and prejudice. This doctrine is at least tangible, but what its sponsors have forgotten is that to attack you must have an incentive.

Now reaction to northern criticism may be an incentive, local pride another. But these are hardly adequate. Northern criticism is almost inoperative today, and without it local pride feels little stimulation. And then it may happen, as it has in the past, that local pride will reply to northern criticism by taking its hates, prejudices, and puritanism to its bosom. William J. Robertson, author of *The New South*, in an odd moment, has hopefully placed the burden of motivation upon the universities, where, no doubt, it partly belongs. But Edwin Mims, author of *The Advancing South*, himself an educator and a fervent one, is less confident of fruitful results from this source:

Why give money to higher institutions of learning if they are threatened, and in some cases actually confronted by a negation of the very spirit of research and inquiry that scholarship demands and especially when some of these institutions are supine to the point of conformity and convention? A section that is still solid in politics, however issues and candidates may change, that is a fertile ground for all sorts of intolerant ideas, that gives little evidence that institutions of higher learning, fostered by state and private benevolence, have any appreciable influence on public opinion—surely such a section must seem a disappointment to the country as a whole.

Dr. Mims' frank statement draws out interest. Does he, then, see a light which will clarify the situation?

I fear not, for in the realm of ideals our chastiser of abuses is often hazy. Dr. Mims seems readily taken in by intelligent modernist mountebanks and is ready to approve any form of liberalism no matter how tame and indecisive. He puts his faith



in the southern leader and gives a list of those who suggest the type: a Mr. Aycock who fought for negro schools, a Mr. Poteat who defended evolution before the Baptist State Convention, a Mr. Snyder who spoke for the unification of some church, Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt where Dr. Mims teaches, a Mr. Mooney who is against the Ku Klux, Bishop Mouzon who advocates Jesus to the disparagement of ecclesiasticism, and Mr. Alderman who spoke for Woodrow Wilson. And Dr. Mims is rather favorable to industrial advance: "Mammon is a terrible monster, but he is a good slave for promoting the higher needs of mankind."

One cannot gather from Dr. Mims exactly what the "New South" is to be like. It might not be materially different from the Middle West where ideals of unification, tolerance, and literacy prevail. At any rate it is to be interested in the life of mind, and Dr. Mims is an impassioned pleader for the claims of the imagination.

As an apostle of culture, Dr. Mims has been of service to the South and deserves to be placed ahead of the southern leaders he has named. His failure, or partial failure, results from his willingness to temporize; he has matched his reluctances with those of the South. To the dual doctrine of Success and the Code he has added an amendment, the claims of the imagination.

Now the free life of the mind, as I have suggested, is incompatible with the Code and uncongenial to the doctrine of Success. The southerner under the influence of Dr. Mims' oratory is temporarily elevated, but when he relaxes he forgets, and his inhibitions continue to cloak him.

#### IV

The cure for an inhibition is to expose its remote cause, to show the patient the peculiar nature of his complex in the light of normality and sane human action. But first of all the patient must be convinced that he has an inhibition unfavorable to growth. To do this is not easy; the whole moral life of the patient must, at times, be undermined.

It would be a thankless job to show to the southerner the remote origins of the Code and to explain how it became transformed in fastening itself upon him as an instrument of evil. The task is one



for a courageous historian of society, disassociated from neighborly values. He would show how in tory and feudal England, where the Code originated, it was a noble thing—a colorful ornament. Religious patronage and intellectual reticences would well become a person of admitted cultural superiority and the chivalric attitude soften a relationship where male dominance was unquestioned. Our historian would relate how in the initial stages of the great transplantation from which the South sprang, the Code retained its proper place as ornament and appendage to gentility; and how, in the absence of a stabilized cultural atmosphere, the genteel qualities of intellect became less and less pronounced, leaving only the Code as a spiritual possession. He would picture the rise of the small farmer and merchant in the days before the Civil War; he would reveal their aspiration to the squirearchy in the large cheaply-built houses, often of clapboard, that they affected; and, in considering the spread of the Code and the reverence for it, he would render due account to the matchless sale of the Waverley novels.

The transitional events from the Civil War to the present day should constitute the second section or perhaps volume of the history. We would have before us the details of reconstruction and the economic modifications of industrialism, which constitute a single increasing tendency. We would see that the conquest of the South only began at Appomattox; that it progressed by minute stages as each well-endowed southerner left the South, as each farmer left the farm, as each immigrant arrived. Amid the contortions of a social system we would see that the South, like Greece, assimilated its conquerors. One and all—business man, lawyer, merchant, thief—they aspired to the squirearchy, accepted its genteel values, and became in time its prime defenders. And the small farmer, denuded of power and slaves and title, retained the Code as the sole vestige of a memorable strength and a Lost Cause.

Our historian would show that in the initial stages of southern society the Code added dignity to an undignified life and stabilization to an unregulated state of society; but he would also indicate that, in the spread of the Code through the gradations of society, the reluctances imposed by it began to cloak the errors of democracy. We would see how reticence became transmuted

into conformity and hesitance, religious patronage into spiritual subjection. The 'Must Nots' of the Code, he would tell us, became the tribal taboos. And what resulted was a genteel land minus the attributes of gentility, a chivalric region lacking the spirit of knighthood, a pleasant and respectful society but not a civilization.

If the southerner will accept this analysis of the inhibitory cause of his malady, he will, I believe, be started on the road to recovery and growth. Guidance, however, cannot be given him. Only the direction of the Fair City may be pointed out and certain of its attractions mentioned; and this, we feel certain, is the proper function of southern social criticism and of the southern university.

The difficulty is that the southern university is hampered and that the southern critic is a professor. He is directly responsible to a board of trustees composed of traditional southerners. And consequently his words of wisdom are as evasive as the pamphlet of directions supplied with a keg of unfermented grape juice. The student is bewildered, lost, out of touch with world-currents of thought. And Dr. Mims has little right to grieve that the southerner will not fight for intellectual freedom and honesty, for southern students catch but vague glimmerings of what these terms mean.

I find it necessary to make this statement in order to dispel the confident hope of the southern layman-critic in 'education'. William J. Robertson sees the southern university to be "as modern and liberal as the higher learning in the East and West"—which, as a matter of fact, it is not. And Grover C. Hall, editor of the *Montgomery Advertiser*, in *Scribner's* for February, 1928, finds all is well in those southern universities where the teaching of sciences is 'unhampered'—drawing too great comfort, perhaps, from tolerance.

For the southern university is not even as free as the university of the Middle-west. Radicalism, of course, is in disfavor in both localities, but the South has the monopoly in vigilance against it. Religion, inactive in the Middle-west, casts its pall upon the southern university. The youth, to be sure, feel its influence only slightly. But the professor cannot, or will not, "stand the gaff" when irate mamas draw up resolutions. True, his teachings are

seldom called in question, for he knows well the limits by which he is expected to abide.

In defense, the southern professor says that "civilizations are properly autogenous developments. The acorn contains the oak tree. Care should be taken to eliminate the surplus vegetation. Reticence comes from the wise admission that the oak tree cannot become an elm." The figure is deceptive. For growth is dependent upon light and air and the vitality of the ground as well as upon the strength of the seed. If the land is marshy, if there is too much water in the soil, the acorn will not develop. It were better off on a rocky, wind-swept eminence. And everywhere, as the poet says, sunlight fosters its growth.

But figures of speech will prove anything. A civilization may develop in an autogenous manner like that of China. But, on the other hand, it may develop like that of Britain, closest cousin of the South—a nation of many races whose genius has lain in assimilating and transmuting thought-movements of varied non-native origin. Theories accounting for the development and transformation of civilizations might with more profit be drawn from study of the later ones. An important factor not to be neglected is the influence produced by the free translation of printed books. A great writer no longer caps a local literary movement. Tourgeniev, writing with a technique learned in Paris, interprets Russia to England and America. Baudelaire, praying to Poe as a saint, makes ghoulish woodlands of Weir for France. Associated inquiry-groups, like charts of aviators' flights, stretch around the globe.

But a land that, at best, merely tolerates science, that wilfully isolates itself from the tendencies of modern thought, that imposes academic reticence, a land that is fast becoming merely another industrial community because the illusion it lived by, and tries to live by, carries with it no incentive to grow and is therefore decadent,—such a land is not a land of promise. Nor will it be one so long as the southern leaders and professors, grown cautious and over-moderate, keep close to shore. With all fairness one can say that these directors of thought are ever ready to give ground in deference to ancient deities; that they shrink from the martyrdom attendant with propounding a doctrine of world-culture. And under their beneficent influence the congenial seeds

of genius they nourish grow into full-blown sunflowers, and the birds they hatch from eagles' eggs take wings and fly far away.

The prospect sometimes disheartens the thoughtful southerner. He blames it all on the Civil War, as does Gerald W. Johnson in *Scribner's* for March, 1925. He reviews the insults the South has suffered and apostrophizes the courage and fortitude it showed during the days of reconstruction. What wonder, he says, that the people were thrown back upon hate, prejudice, and intolerance for sustenance? In consideration of her suffering does not the South deserve sympathetic and careful nurturing?

Surely the South is entitled to consideration, but for her own critics and teachers to temporize is not needful. The older generation's habits of thought are not subject to change, but the inquisitive spirit manifests itself increasingly among the youth. And these young men do not turn to the southern 'leader' for guidance; they have become suspicious of him, and they think the southern professor over-cautious if not just a little stale.

Accordingly the last and greatest failure of the southern critic-professor is to take account of the younger generation; to see that the better-endowed student is unconcerned with attacks upon puritanism while he is trying to extend the limits of his understanding, to realize that he responds readily to European thinkers in trying to avoid the American and the southern maladies, to realize at once that he is not a traditionalist and has little sympathy with people like Corra Harris, who say, "We are less intellectual than Northern people because we have more natural sense and do not feel, as they do, an artificial craving for culture to make up for a native deficiency."

One honest professor can do wonders: and for an example, I may refer to John Crowe Ransom at Vanderbilt. Mr. Ransom, a high Tory, has little hope for the masses. For inquisitive students, however, he provides nourishment. He selects for study, comment, and sometimes emulation a group of modern thinkers whose works have interested him. He speaks with simple directness, never avoiding issues, never purposely stirring them up, never expressing a finality. He does not talk about the function of criticism or the attributes of the scholastic mind. Instead, he inculcates a respect for mental integrity by his temperate sagacity and suggests a critical attitude toward shams in being



without pretense himself. Mr. Ransom's class in writing is over-full, and from his influence Vanderbilt has become a productive literary center.

Here, then, is a hint; a beginning. The South must become honest and purified. To this Mr. Ransom would never agree: no land, he would say, can become honest and purified. Honest and purified, then, at the top: southern writers sufficiently honest and purified must adopt a critical attitude toward the southern state of mind; perhaps, gradually, a southern public will appear, honest and purified enough to read their writings. At any rate, a critical attitude must be adopted to lay forever the favorite southern illusions which arise out of frustration and a relish for the importance of the eighteenth century social arts. Then, bye and bye, other illusions may arise which can be similarly criticized with intelligence. Meanwhile, no more oratory; no more parades.

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### PAUSE BEFORE A STRANGE SHUT DOOR

Back of these curtains I shall never know  
Voices to call, feet to come and go,  
Hands that lift and reach I shall never see  
To name them all and hear them answer me;  
Their ups and downs, their doings and undoings  
Will never, as far as I am concerned, be things  
That bear import to me. I stand and wait  
Patient and silent under an alien gate.

But just as well for they will never be  
Cognizant of the most or least in me;  
My face will never be familiar  
To their strange eyes, and all their regular  
Routine will never fit my plans at all:  
I call the condition mutual and equal.

MERRILL MOORE.



## CICERO'S IDEA OF FRIENDSHIP

The reader of Cicero's *De Amicitia* is frequently puzzled in arriving at the author's point of view. Even those critics who are most generous in their praise of various aspects of its style refer to the lack of logical arrangement, to the needless repetitions, and to the contradictions which are found in the dialogue. The subject is not developed with the same consistency which we find in the *De Senectute*, composed only a few weeks before. The cheery note of the *De Senectute* has disappeared. The *De Amicitia* the note of gladness. In the swift change of Cicero's feeling there obviously belongs to the first rude awakening of Cicero from those hopes which followed the Ides of March. Perhaps one might expect the very reverse of what actually happens in the treatment of the two subjects, old age and friendship. To the former ordinarily we ascribe the pessimistic note and to the latter note of gladness. In the swift change of Cicero's feeling there is a direct relation to the events of the hour and if he shows confusion in the development of the idea of friendship, we may really have more respect for the man Cicero than if he had succeeded in Stoic fashion in making all human accidents subject to virtue.

There is a significance in his choice of the dramatic date, the year 129, a few days after the death of the great Scipio, at another dark hour when sinister forces seemed to have undermined the state. The gloomy forebodings placed in the mouth of Laelius correspond well with the feelings that disturbed Cicero's mind. In the repeated warnings to avoid entangling political alliances we may see a deliberate effort on the part of Cicero to dissuade certain of his acquaintances from following Antony in his mad career. It is curious that this dialogue was ostensibly written in response to the many suggestions of Atticus and was also dedicated to Atticus, a man who with Epicurean aloofness involved himself in no precarious political situation and for that reason had absented himself from Rome, whereas Cicero of set purpose frequently chose the dangerous course of political service. The *De Amicitia* has some of the appearances of a political brochure, yet it is nominally addressed to one whose bonds with Cicero

were all of the personal sort, and out of this double relation arise most of the contradictions of the dialogue. We had a right to expect that a discussion of friendship written by Cicero to Atticus should reveal the personal element to the exclusion of all else, but such is not the case. The political situation with its corollaries of expediency and calculation thrusts itself into the more intimate experiences; indeed, tends to dominate the tone of the whole. When this is understood, we may see in the discussion a reflection of the troubled state of Cicero's mind.

But aside from this more fundamental contradiction of the situation we find others which are perplexing to the reader. He tells us in one place that friendships are everlasting because founded upon nature, which can not be changed. Then later we are told that it is sometimes necessary to dissolve friendships for political reasons. After he has told us that the first law of friendship is that we do only the honorable things for our friends, we are somewhat mystified to learn that the unjust desires of friends should sometimes be aided and that we may depart from the straight path of rectitude;—even the qualifying clause, *modo ne summa turpitudine sequatur*, does not completely remove our difficulty.

The truth of the matter is that the author at different times of composition has placed himself at different planes of thought, that he at one time thinks of friendship as an ideal such as is practised by the man perfect in wisdom and almost divine, and at another time he obviously is thinking of the practical friendship of two gentlemen of the world. These opposing points of view are responsible for many of the disparities of the discussion. Cicero tells us that the practice of friendship is *varius et multiplex* and the less critical reader may be disposed to regard this variable formula as more correctly representing the state of friendship as it is actually found. The same reader may regard the friendship of Emerson, which is established on a lofty, transcendental basis as after all less suitable for the average man. Cicero was conscious of his inconsistencies and did not hesitate to call attention to them. He does not cut to the quick, *neque id ad vivum resec*, in his interpretations. He speaks of friends such as appear to our eyes, whom we have actually seen or heard of through tradition, known to everyday life. He warns us that he is not

speaking of the common and ordinary friendship but of the true and perfect kind. He reminds us that he is leaving this high standard and descending to those of the ordinary type. But frequent as these reminders are they do not keep pace with the changes of his point of view. He is apparently on the higher level when he suddenly tells us that one may deviate from the path of rectitude in order to help a friend, and after he has admittedly descended to the lower level he expresses thoughts which are more appropriate to the ideal friendship. Though he states that friendship can exist only among the good (and in spite of his first disclaimer that he does not press this point too far, he later returns to it) he finds various degrees and kinds of friendship, as true, certain, faithful, most beautiful, most natural, perfect, unfaithful, common, vulgar, and flattering. Since friendship is based on virtue, it is curious to note that there may be friends who succumb to a small sum of money, others to a larger sum, while others will not desert their friends for anything less than political preferment, in which surrender of friendship Cicero seems inclined to justify them. He himself had been annoyed some twenty years before this when—a candidate for consul by the inopportune requests of his friend, Caecilius, who was Atticus's uncle—he preferred to lose a friend rather than his chance of the consulship. This was probably only one instance out of many. But so much may be conceded to politics.

These inconsistencies may be laid as well to the manifold phases of life and of friendship, as they really exist, as to Cicero's state of mind. It has been suggested that they arise partly from a multiplicity of treatises on the subject which the writer had read but did not succeed in welding into a symmetrical whole. Only a year before he composed the *De Amicitia* he wrote Atticus,<sup>1</sup> that his numerous works were copies and that he produced only the words in which he abounded. In some departments of his works, this confession may have a literal application but it does not seem to apply to the *De Amicitia*. That he read other works on friendship is very plain. He refers to views of Empedocles, Archytas, and others. But here at least he maintains his independence. The borrowings, which are not considerable,

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<sup>1</sup> (Epis. ad Att. 12, 52, 3.)

he has impressed with his own spirit. Some views of predecessors he quotes only to refute. It seems difficult to believe that the dialogue is a loose concatenation of views of others. Its political aspect, the relation of the individual to the state, the many Roman examples, the special implications of time and place all go to stamp the discussion as Roman and as Ciceronian.

Cicero regards friendship as a development with various stages and processes of growth. There is for him no conception of friendship springing into life full-grown or of love at first sight. The first phase in the process is the perception of virtue by one who already possesses it. It is in accordance with nature that virtue is attracted to virtue. Thus friendship becomes a natural thing. Need has nothing to do with the origin of friendship though the exchange of favors furthers its development. Boyhood friendships are often laid aside with the assumption of the toga of manhood. But even after they have reached manhood, they may for various personal and political reasons break off their friendships. We should bestow our goodwill cautiously and by degrees just as in breaking in a team of horses we give them a little rein at first in order to try them and then more and more until we have proved their trustworthiness. We should not form our friendships until mature in age and judgment. A similarity of pursuits is not sufficient basis for friendship. This all seems mercenary and unromantic to us. This deliberate and calculating method of choosing friends is the direct antithesis of Emerson's thought that "friends are self-elected". At what stage we may call the attraction *amicitia* is not quite clear. Cicero himself seems to feel that something was lacking for a friendship which represented only the attraction of virtue to virtue, and so he adds that when that has happened, love follows as a matter of course, *id cum contigit, amor exoriatur necesse est*. Occasionally he seems to catch a glimpse of the identity of *amor* and *amicitia* and he recognizes their common derivation from *amo*, to love, and admits *amor* as a chief element in the cementing of goodwill, yet again and again he bases his friendship upon virtue and the attraction for virtue, to which however love may in due time be added through exchange of gifts and services. From the fact that he makes friendship a development rather than a spontaneous, even though unreasonable, outburst of feeling, he has provided the opportunity



for calculation and cold reasoning and judgment, which preclude the romantic conception of friendship. We may doubt if Cicero himself with his warm, impulsive heart consistently applied friendship as he has here taught it.

In spite of the strong political bias there are many indications of the personal aspect of friendship which would satisfy even the most critical when taken apart from the other considerations. We may note a few of these. "I so enjoy the memory of our friendship that I seem to have lived happily because I have lived with Scipio—with whom there was a common care in things public and private, the same home and a common military service and complete agreement in desires, pursuits, and opinions". "How can there be any real life which is not founded on the mutual goodwill of a friend? What is sweeter than to have one with whom you dare to tell all things as with yourself? What joy so great would there be in prosperity unless you had one who rejoiced in it equally as you yourself? Moreover it would be difficult to bear adversity without one who would suffer from it even more than you." "Let us do honorable things for sake of our friends, let us not even wait until we are asked, but let enthusiasm always be present and hesitation be far away; let us dare to give true advice frankly." "Why should we utterly remove friendship from our life in order that we suffer no discomforts on its account? For what is the difference when the stirring of the soul is lost, not between man and beast, but between man and a tree or a rock or anything of that sort?" "Therefore that sorrow which you must often experience for a friend does not have so great weight as to drive friendship from life." "It is not so much the gain secured through a friend as the love of friend itself which pleases." "Friends are the best and fairest furniture of life". "It is a true saying that many pecks of salt must be beaten together before the service of friendship is rounded out." "A true friend is your second self, as it were." "From all things which fortune or nature has granted me I have nothing to compare with the friendship of Scipio—We had one home, one mode of life and that in common, and not only was our military service but our seasons abroad and in the country were spent together." These are but a few of the passages that might be quoted. Their total



impression is quite pleasing. Indeed, we may well believe they would represent the real Cicero if his mind had not become distorted by other and more worldly considerations.

The political considerations were not for Cicero an end in themselves. Beyond them lay the opportunity to do a real service to his country, which he tells us more than once was dearer to him than life. The political situation in his day was very tense. In our days of microscopical differences between party and party, a defeated candidate may with perfect propriety send congratulations to his successful opponent. In the words of the late President Garfield, "the fairest flowers of friendship often bloom across the party-wall". But not so in Cicero's time. The difference between two policies might very well represent the safety of the state. The sacrifice of a friend was a small matter in comparison with this larger interest. This should be borne in mind in estimating the political references of the dialogue. Entire sections are given over to the political considerations. One's political relation with Tiberius Gracchus seems to determine whether he is qualified for friendship or not. An obligation of friendship is to assist as far as possible the political aspirations of your friends. For political reasons one may sever the bonds of friendship, if the same thing be not mutually expedient or if they have different opinions about the state. Agreement in political matters is one of the bonds uniting Laelius and Scipio. An important element in the friendship of Aemilius Papus and Fabricius Luscinius is the fact they were consuls together and censors together. He almost excuses one who places his own political elevation over that of a friend. This is practical politics. One of the adjectives most frequently used in describing this dialogue is "practical". This quality is certainly present as regards politics. We do not find however that the mercenary influences of private gain-seeking enter into consideration. He is very careful to show that such advantages may attend a friendship already formed but friendship worthy of the name does not spring from them. The political aspect may derive its justification from the special conditions in which the writer lives, it may be practical, it is far superior to a commercial interpretation, but certainly less interesting than one which would include more of the personal and spiritual element.

Of affection of son for father, father for son, or man for woman, not a word is said. The word woman occurs only once in the dialogue and then in a derogatory sense. The absence of the romantic or sentimental phase from the *De Amicitia* marks the widest possible difference from the modern conception of friendship. For the sentimental conception is only possible when the idea of the state has been subordinated to that of the individual.

With his interest in philosophy we might have expected Cicero to develop the subject from that point of view. True, the ethical quality pervades the entire dialogue. All friendship is reduced to virtue. Friendship is the promoter of virtue, not the companion of vice. It contains all the special virtues. Attention to virtue is the indispensable condition of friendship. In the basic principle of virtue, he finds a sort of consistency for the various manifestations of friendship, *in ea est enim convenientia, in ea stabilitas, in ea constantia*, which he intends should offset the *varius et multiplex usus amicitiae*. True friendship is free from flattery, contains nothing false, and is measured wholly by the truth. The fellowship of virtue with virtue in their journey toward the *summum naturae bonum* is a most blessed consummation. The idea of friendship as a cosmic force is frequently alluded to but never developed. Friendship is repeatedly given a natural origin. He is quoting the philosopher of Agrigentum when he says that friendship is the attracting principle of the universe and hatred the dispelling. More than once he draws analogies for friendship from the animal world. Farther than these allusions he does not go. To the abstract *amicitia* he refers about 143 times and to the concrete *amicus* only 77 times but the ratio of nearly two to one seems to involve nothing of a philosophical attitude or to prevent the practical, concrete treatment of the subject.

In conclusion we may say that the *De Amicitia* is a compound resulting from several points of view. The personal aspect seems genuine so long as the writer allows it free play, and probably more nearly represents the real Cicero than do the other phases. The political features were rendered necessary by the nature of the times in which Cicero lived, and were bound to have a certain measure of calculation. There is little of the thought of friendship as a cosmic force and certainly nothing of romantic or sentimental

friendship. The contradictions are there and may be charged to the author's disturbed state of mind, to the fact that friendship is indeed a complex matter as regards its application, and to the writer's desire to warn friends away from dangerous political alliances. If Cicero set out to confine the idea of friendship within definite bounds, to give it a consistent bearing, or, to change the metaphor, to try it out gradually by giving it more and more of rein, we must conclude that he found the idea unruly and incapable of being thus restrained. The attractiveness of the dialogue lies not in the development of the thought, not in the comprehensive survey of the entire plan, but in the beauty of certain passages when considered apart from the whole, and in the graceful diction and the melodious sentences.

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#### CROSS EXAMINATION AT THE DIET OF WORDS

"Tell me why do you scan the Zend Avesta?"

"So to be able to tell you from your sister."

"Why do you stop to read the Talmud, then?"

"It makes me remember the world of men."

"Konfucius' writings—do you still peruse

Them?" "Yes, they took the daemon I would lose."

"Teachings of others, then, St. Thomas Aquinas?"

"No other words so fully wine and dine us."

"Well, strange fellow, how do you subsist

On verbage in this fashion?" "I seek the gist

And so am nourished through the prophet's word

I get less provender by fire and sword

Waging in enemy fields, besides, I find

Fruits and flowers and grains in the ancient mind."

MERRILL MOORE.

## LENINGRAD GLIMPSES

"Wir haben nichts aus Moskau bekommen. Wir können nichts tun. Wir müssen telegraphieren. *No word from Moscow. We can do nothing. We must telegraph.*" So the slow-moving, but kindly, Soviet consul at Stockholm painfully dug out his German sentences while I more painfully sweated forth my shocked replies. Telegrams at my expense, a week's delay, but finally the welcome "wir können das Visum geben," which allowed me with my wife to take the night boat across the Baltic. One word *Leningrad*, plus eloquent gestures, had to suffice to tell the Finnish porter in Helsingfors that we wanted to check our baggage at the station while we waited for the night train out. An excellent dinner at Helsingfors' leading hotel, Societet Huset, for thirty marks (seventy-five cents), and soon we were again at the station ready to depart. A talkative Jewish girl, an *émigrée*, in excellent English advanced the gratuitous information that Leningrad was not what it used to be. "I still call it Petrograd," she said. So the keynote of outside opinion was struck for the last time before we crossed the border.

No diner on this train! Through pure oversight, I had forgotten to inquire. Hence, after a hungry morning, such a meal at Rajajoki as German, meagre Swedish, and the always expressive sign-language could wrest from this Finnish station.

The Frontier! Finnish communists in the third class car behind us singing the International. One woman ringing out above the others in a striking clear-toned voice. Inspection of the second class baggage in the compartments, thorough, but considerate, with every effort not to disarrange. (New York please take notice.) A dash out of the train to change Finnish to Russian money, since this cannot be done at foreign banks before reaching the frontier. Much rushing about of third class passengers carrying their baggage to the Inspectors—the proletariat still discriminated against in this respect as compared with occupants of the single sleeping car. Strange physical types! Stolid muzhiks, toil-worn peasant women with furrowed faces, a soldier with his face swathed in bandages, the mumps!—some boys and young men in trunks, healthy and bronzed by the sun, "sportsmen", a Russian

fellow traveler vouchsafed the information with a trace of amused, but kindly, irony. They were physical culturists, pursuing the European fad of nudity and sun-bathing, not without benefit, if one may judge by the types in evidence.

Finally, after a long wait at the border, the train went on. "Sehen Sie wie der Zug schneller geht als in Finnland?" one of the Russian professors asked me with naïve pride. I countered by saying I had heard that the Leningrad-Moscow train was even faster. "Ja, er geht eben so wie der Blitz!" So, in the thoughts of this lightning-like train, friendly relations were established.

At length we arrived. Fortunately, overstrain upon our meagre and timid Russian was averted by the fact that we were met at the Finlandski station by the genial young director of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, or, as the Russians call it, with their newly-acquired taste for abbreviations, *Voks*. A wheezy little auto took the three of us with our baggage to the *Dom Uchonik*, the Home for Scholars. It cost five rubles (\$2.50) for this short ride, but it is no wonder, for auto-cabs are rare and little used. The horse-drawn *drozhkis* will do as well for much less, only they are too small to carry three people with baggage.

The city appears torn up and dusty. Some streets are being repaired and are consequently rough and cluttered.

Our vehicle puffs its way hesitatingly into a courtyard and stops in the midst of torn-up pavement before a large, but dark, portal. Three long flights of stairs, a winding corridor, then our room, a splendid big room with two huge windows looking out upon the Neva and straight across the river to the Fortress of Peter and Paul, the Russian Bastille. A magnificent view it is, as fine almost as anything in the world. So we were established in this former ducal palace, much fallen from its previous luxury, of course, but as well kept up as possible under the circumstances. It is located on the former royal row just below the Winter Palace and the Hermitage. In our room some of the old chairs with faded monograms and, against the walls, two huge black *armoires*, hand-carved, remained to contrast sharply with the democratic iron beds of the new régime.

"You like your room?" asked our young guide, pleased by our exclamations of enthusiasm.

Of course, how could we help liking it? Cheaper than the hotel, and then in addition this unsurpassed view upon the ever-



changing Neva. There was further interest in the fact that Georges Duhamel, the French novelist, had passed a few days in this same room the previous spring. This Home for Scholars is the Soviet Union's interesting attempt to solve the high-cost-of-living problem for its own and occasional foreign scholars.

Too early for the one daily meal served in the Home, we were able to relieve our hunger with bread and boiled milk. All the drinking water is boiled too and therefore safe.

Later appeared a fellow-American who had arrived a week before. He proved an invaluable guide to what would otherwise have been appallingly new. Henceforth we were the inseparable three musketeers.

First problem—meals. At the Home only one meal is served a day and this from three o'clock to seven. Boiling water, however, is to be had on the kitchen stove at almost any hour. Hence, we have but to buy *chai*, tea, and *hliéba*, bread, and we can have our own breakfasts daily in our room. We quickly learned to augment this with fruit, a welcome and wholesome addition. By three o'clock, in spite of a roll to stave off the pangs of the fateful hour from twelve to one, we understood why Russian dinners were served so early in the afternoon. We generally did justice to ours, and the inevitable, but excellent, *chai*—fluid heat, at it was,—never came amiss. At night a dish of ice cream with cakes or a cup of hot chocolate at an excellent, though rather expensive, pastry shop, completed our eating arrangements for the day.

Night—or rather the long Arctic dusk of the northern summer. The Neva a mirror of ever-varied color, from the gold of the sun setting in the north, toward nine in the evening, to the greyish blue of a Whistler nocturne, as water and sky fuse in the dusk of midnight. We lean on the broad window-sill caught by the exotic beauty of the scene. How different it must be in winter, when for these wonderful "white nights" of summer one must pay in early darkness and the bleak ice-locked river! Now people are strolling carefree along the quais below or leaning over the parapet chatting together in this Russian language, which I had ignorantly imagined harsh but which in average speech is pleasant and musical, softened by its many palatals. Occasionally light laughter rings out, occasionally a wordy quarrel between the bargemen below. How like normal every-day life it seems, and how different from the hectic stories which in the outside world

so often pass for truth. Food and work and love, after all, as Anatole France so well reminds us, these are the major occupations of the average person of any age and a stormy period of revolution and violent change is hardly an exception.

The Dom Uchônik, as has been said, is located in an old ducal palace on the royal row below the Hermitage and the Winter Palace; the former, as every one knows, one of the great art galleries of the world, the latter a painful surprise in that it is hardly to be surpassed as an example of hideous architecture and poor taste. This is true, not merely because the red stucco, so much affected in this country where marble is rare, is now scaling off and revealing, symbolically, the hollowness and the superficiality of the old régime; it is due also to the broken lines caused by the numerous columns and pilasters of the façade and by the continuous string of statues jutting from the roof against the sky line. By daylight, the whole effect is petty and ridiculous in the extreme; by night it is grotesque, never is it impressive. The Czar was right in not liking to live there, though perhaps he had other than esthetic reasons in this city of brewing revolutions. The government office buildings on the opposite side of the great square are not displeasing in their freshly painted yellow with contrasting white columns. We wondered if the desolate 'Winter Palace was to be left in such pitiful case, as a bit of ironic humor to point the contrast between the old and the new. But no: already workmen are scraping off the scaling red paint and are evidently attempting to make the old building, so far as is possible, less hideous than at present.

Except for a few windowless buildings further down the river front and on one corner of the Square of the Revolution, we saw no subsisting signs of bombardment or warfare, only such desolation as might be expected from lack of repair due to the years of economic struggle and the pressure of more immediate problems. But now workmen are at the task of rehabilitation, removing débris, laying a huge sewer under the former Millionaya Ulitza (Millionaire's Street!), repaving and restoring. Necessary work is going forward.

Of course Leningrad is not what Saint Petersburg was, nor will it perhaps in one sense ever be again. Such movement and glamor as it had from being the capital and the center for the aristocratic court life have gone. The teeming activities of the

new government are now in Moscow. The initiative for new policies in government, economics, education, perhaps more and more the cultural center of the country have gone now to the old Russian capital and left the modern German city of Peter the Great. So Leningrad inevitably has the aspect of a city, much of whose former glory has departed. It is a little sad to think of. One understands the natural and instinctive regret of some of the older inhabitants as they say: "Leningrad is not what it used to be." Of course it is not. Many of the amenities of life have gone also, at least for the time being. The struggle with elemental problems is too keen to leave much opportunity for surface gaiety and the social life of normal times. Such is one of the inevitable results of revolution and sudden change. But one can easily understand the moving of the capital away from the Baltic port to a more central location with older Russian traditions behind it. Perhaps too the Kremlin fortress is safer as a center for governmental leaders in time of struggle than anything that Leningrad has to offer.

We went of course to Saint Isaac's Cathedral, now like many other great churches of Russia no longer called a church but a museum. It is unchanged, however, except that it is not now used for services. The interior for some unapparent reason is impaired by a huge steel scaffolding running up to the dome, inadequate for support, too permanent in appearance for repairs. Even without it, however, the interior would have little in its favor except its size and the unique columns and pilasters of beautiful lapis lazuli and malachite. Outside too are the well-known columns of polished granite, supporting all four huge porticoes. Gigantic in size, brightly polished, their mottled brown surface gleaming, they are remarkable for sheer bulk and for the beauty and costliness of the material used. Except for a place in the middle, proportioned to human stature, the steps that lead up to them are equally of gigantic size, made seemingly for some huge Gulliver as we Lilliputians discover to our surprise only on drawing near. We made the long perspiring climb to the top of the great gilded dome and were rewarded by a first view of Leningrad as a whole. Architecturally the city is monotonous. One realizes it from this height more than from below. It bears the marks of its origin, it is the product of the iron will of despotic old Peter, determined to build a city here on the marshes and make of it an occidental metropolis

in a partly oriental country. So it is more like Berlin as contrasted with, let us say, Dresden or Munich. It is the result of fiat rather than of slow growth, it bears the impress mainly of one will rather than of many wills and lacks therefore the variety and the spontaneity of cities with a long history and sound traditions of culture and of taste behind them. The Neva, in summer at least, is the city's chief beauty. After that, a few extensive parks with trees and verdure, at present somewhat unkempt. The one Russian characteristic of the vista is the gleaming domes and spires and crosses which one sees all over the city. These linger now a manifestation of the old order in religion which could attain grandeur and splendor, and sometimes a strange exotic beauty, but which, engrossed in formalism, concerned itself not at all with securing better conditions of life for the great masses of the people. Just below us is the Admiralty, also with gilded spire. From it as a center radiate several long straight streets, the Prospects, which form the main arteries through the city. Of them all, the Nevsky, now the Twenty-fifth of October, is of course the most important. The old name, more convenient than the cumbersome new one, still lingers in the mouths of most people.

Through the dusty walks of the Garden of the Toilers, and then we turn to the right into the Nevsky. The hurrying people seem mainly bent upon their business. Occasionally some one looks curiously at us bespectacled foreigners, whose clothes, though anything but elegant, nevertheless differentiate us from most of the natives. Sack coats for men are rare. We liked the cool comfort of the Russian smock, the Tolstoyana (from its first great sponsor), but thought it best to justify our meagre Russian by our natural foreign aspect. Neither did we two masculine members of our little group let our beards grow in spite of the wonderful opportunity, which may never present itself again.

Three-fourths of the shops on the upper part of the Nevsky bear the soon familiar sign, "zakrüt," closed. Food shops, both the private stores and the government-owned cooperatives with their big red signs bearing the word Proletariat in huge letters, are the most abundant. We soon made their acquaintance for our daily purchases of fruit and bread with occasional excursions into more difficult realms. These government stores are generally thronged. The system is quick and efficient. You pay before receipt of your purchase. Having learned its cost and paid the



girl enthroned behind the familiar-looking cash register, you deliver to the clerk the check for the proper amount and secure the article desired. Counting boards, used in the Orient but less familiar to the western world, are everywhere in evidence and facilitate rapid computation. Always we met courteous treatment, frequently, as we returned to the same places, friendliness and amused, but kindly, smiles at our stumbling, laconic talk or the vehement sign language, which had to be our constant resource. These Russian numerals, in which as in English the unstressed syllables are gobbled down in favor of those bearing the accent, are constantly tricking us. We think we have them and then another individual pronounces more carelessly or hurriedly and we make the inevitable confusion between twelve and twenty or eighteen and eighty. How we love forty, whose *sorok* is so different from all the rest that we can never go wrong!

One evening we strolled into an ice cream and pastry shop of the best type, named appropriately "gurman," *gourmand*. *Morozhenoye*, ice cream, that we knew, but alas! embarrassment of riches—we gathered that the waitress was telling us that there were six different kinds and that we should demonstrate the freedom of the will by selecting. We shook our heads and looked as blank as we felt. Altogether it seemed for a minute like a stalemate. Not so, however. Suddenly the girl darted away and shortly returned with three little dabs of different colored ice cream on a plate, samples. The wills were free after all. We selected, and when she returned we prudently prepared for the future by having her write the names for us. Henceforth, vanilla and raspberry and chocolate ice cream were in our repertory, and by a process of elimination of the strange looking words on the placard above the table, we even broadened our vocabulary with practical effect.

The Hôtel d'Europe is the one hotel which still functions with fair satisfaction to foreign taste. The dining room is well-nigh hidden away on the roof, while a less inviting restaurant greets the uninitiated on the street level. How we blessed the international words! One of these, *restoran*, constantly took us expeditiously in the elevator to the fifth floor where the restaurant was to be found. There on Sundays, when no meals were served at the Dom Uchonik, and occasionally for variety on other days we ate in fine weather out of doors, a view of the city roofs and



spires below us and in front of us bright colored flowers, geraniums, heliotropes, nasturtiums, and petunias in boxes along the railing. For a ruble and a half—seventy-five cents—one could have here the *table d'hôte* meal, between three and eight o'clock, but woe to the unfortunate who arrived after eight! He must eat a less substantial meal *à la carte* at three times the price. The menus were chiefly in French, though considerably disguised by phonetic transliteration into Russian characters. After one sad excursion into the mysteries of a fearful iced fish soup, a delicacy which we thought an atrocity, we learned its name and henceforth stuck to the watery, but safe, consommé. Soup, fish, meat, vegetables, and dessert, usually an ice, these were the regular dinner staples, and we found them entirely adequate, if not distinctive, though the food was frequently rather better, if less varied and more copious at the Dom Uchonik, to say nothing of its being actually twice as cheap there. But table cloths and napkins and the outdoors and an orchestra and variety are not to be despised and so we appreciated both places and fared the better for the change.

"Krasnaya gaziétta, krasnaya gaziétta," from the quiet of the Public Library we heard the newsboys in the Nevsky below daily calling out their wares, and thought how much more sensational it sounded when we translated "Red Gazette, Red Gazette." After all, that is just the name of the newspaper and must by now have worn threadbare whatever sensational connotation it may have had at the beginning.

We went of course several times to the Hermitage, one of the great art galleries of the world. People ask on your return from Russia whether this or that picture still exists. There are no signs that anything artistic has been damaged or destroyed. On the contrary, everything points to the care with which works of art are preserved and the esteem in which they are held. One of the most striking sights in these rooms where Catherine the Great and her successors once walked is the constant stream on Sundays of conducted parties clattering their way from gallery to gallery. Most nondescript parties, many of them, swarthy faces from the southeast, almond-eyed faces from the borders of China, soldiers in khaki, some men and women barefoot, others the proud possessors of shoes with a resounding squeak, in short the strangest hoard of culture seekers one can imagine. But let us not be

misled by externals. If some show little interest and look vacantly around, others are intent upon the guide's explanations of the pictures; some, school teachers perhaps, are taking notes. It may require a generation, it may require two, for the effects of this work to become apparent, but we have had too many examples in the United States of the phenomenal rise of unprepossessing-looking immigrant or native-born to doubt the ultimate value in many cases of such faith in human nature as the presence of these parties demonstrates.

The Hermitage alone is worth going to Russia to see. There are several excellent Raphaels and Titians, a whole wall of Murillos, and Rembrandts galore. French painting of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is extensively represented. There is material here for another Pitti, only there is need of much pruning, for in the midst of these and other masterpieces there is a terrible amount of junk that the Czars got palmed off on them. Some day perhaps the number of pictures in this great gallery will be reduced to smaller, but finer, proportions.

The theaters and the opera are closed in summer, but one evening we entered one of the parks to which a small admission fee is charged. Inside are little restaurants, an excellent orchestra, an outdoor vaudeville, and, for a further charge, an operetta of no special consequence but with voices better than most, perhaps opera singers glad to pick up a little extra money in summer. This park is thronged in the evening. It is apparently a bourgeois crowd for the most part, if one remembers that bourgeois here represents what is left of the upper strata of society. At least there are no strange, uncouth types here. These people are soberly dressed, but in good taste, and there is an air of quiet refinement about them. The Tolstoyana is rare here and occasionally even a white collar may be seen. The women are attractively, but not expensively, dressed. The entrance fee at the gate and the music have evidently served as a selective influence, so that there is more variation between the inside and the outside than one would expect elsewhere in the world. In spite of the crowds there is no tendency to push and jam. There is an element of quiet and repose about the place which is altogether pleasing.

We decided to go on Sunday to Peterhof, the Russian Versailles, founded by Peter the Great some thirty kilometers below

Leningrad and nearly across the water from Kronstadt of revolutionary fame. We thought it would be pleasant to make the trip by boat. On arriving at the wharf, we learned that the hour given us, eleven o'clock, was incorrect. The boat had gone some twenty or thirty minutes before. The next boat would be at 12:15. The ticket line was already long, and was getting longer, though the window was not yet open. We waited about an hour in line to get our tickets and another half hour to get on the boat, which left twenty-five minutes late. While in line, we read a week-old German newspaper. The boat was jammed. Every available seat was occupied, and large numbers of people, of whom we three, were standing. Not relishing another hour and a half upright, we picked out the place where we were least likely to be stepped on and sat down upon the deck with our German newspaper for our only cushion and the cabin for a back. For a time, by the application of Einstein principles, this was luxury itself. Only for a time, however, as boards have a habit of getting harder and harder the longer one sits on them and legs more and more cramped when they have to be continually drawn out of the way of restless passers-by. Curiously enough, real as the relief was for a time at least, no one seemed desirous of imitating us, but apparently preferred to stand the whole distance. Perhaps we actually shocked the conventions of proletariat soviet-land.

At length we arrived. It was a bright and hot summer's day. The land seemed only a whit less crowded than the boat. Hoards of people were here disporting themselves in this park of the Czars. Many were bathing, or sunning themselves on the long beach. Most of the men here, as on the banks of the Neva in Leningrad, bathe in a Rousseauistic state of nature, but the women are more discreet, though the complete absence of bath houses makes ingenuity the rule in the matter of dressing and undressing. At any rate, the days of reckless nudity for both sexes, reported by some travelers, if they ever existed, have now apparently passed here. The people look healthy; men, women, and children. There are some fine physical specimens, real athletes in appearance, and few cases of excessive obesity or thinness. It would seem that they must have enough to eat, but not too much, and that the cult of the sun and the outdoors is doing them all good.

The main castle at Peterhof was too rococo to make us eager to

enter in line and meander through at a funereal pace. The out of doors was much more attractive. It was a day of *grandes eaux*, and magnificent fountains were playing, many of them offering beautiful vistas through the arched trees. We did enter the little Dutch palace of Peter the Great which he called *Mon Plaisir*. It is located right down upon the shore and consists simply of a single-storied long gallery with a continuous line of windows on both sides, while the ends are somewhat broadened out into transversal wings. It is an H whose center bar has been drawn out preternaturally, like the body of a giant dachshund. Altogether, it is a simple little country house, extraordinarily light and airy, and one thinks better of Peter's taste than of that of some of his successors. In one room stands the telescope with which he is said to have watched the building of his city, Petersburg, across the bay. One wonders what he would think of the changes wrought by the last ten years.

Suddenly, to my great surprise, I heard my name called. It was the young director of the Society for Cultural Relations leading a party of Japanese students with a member of the Japanese Parliament. They invited us to go back with them in their chartered boat. Needless to say, if we had come like the proletariat, we did not refuse to return, under proletariat auspices, like the aristocracy.

Whenever we went from the Dom Uchonik toward the center of the city, whether we followed the canal or went straight up the Nevsky, always the Church of the Resurrection drew our eyes. It is only twenty years since its completion after twenty-four years in building, but in style it follows closely the famous sixteenth-century Vassily Blazhenny Cathedral of Moscow. Imagine Saint Mark's of Venice richer still in coloring, a very mass of mosaics inside and out, but very different in total effect, with its curious onion-like spires rising from the roof like a cluster of some new species of vivid green mushrooms. What a riot of color it is, certainly a very Joseph's coat among cathedrals! The predominating ochre and gold of the outside have a warm richness about them that is altogether pleasing in a strange exotic way, but the blues and greens and reds of the inside, the evident effort to be lavish and costly, the garish icons, and the mediocre artistic merit of the inlaid figures on the walls, repel, rather than attract, the occidental visitor.



The church, unlike Saint Isaac's, is not a museum, but is still used for services. We attended one, but saw only the most stereotyped formalism, deep genuflexions, and the most elaborate crossing in which the whole arm with a wide sweep is brought into play. It is evident that, if the old Russian custom of crossing one's self in the street on passing before a church is now rarely observed, there are still people to whom the old forms have meaning and to whom the old beliefs offer consolation amid the sufferings and turmoil of a changing society. But, if some still keep thus their contact with the past, it is clear that this formalistic religion has little promise in it for the future. It has never grappled with the social problems of every-day life and it is not likely to do so now. The Bolsheviks are frankly philosophical materialists and are turning their efforts directly toward ameliorating conditions, as they see it at least, in this work-a-day world of the present. The veneration in which Lenin is held, the fervor with which Leninism is being taught to the younger generation, the very fanaticism with which the Communist insists upon carrying the light to other nations, amount in effect to a kind of new religion with new dogmas and new tenets of its own. The communist party itself is like a religious order into which one enters only after a difficult period of probation. It is an order which demands of its members comparative poverty and the strictest obedience and discipline. It purges itself ruthlessly of heresy. So old methods repeat themselves in new and unexpected forms.

Before going to Russia I had been told by a man who traveled there before the war: "You'll like the *real* Russian people." Whatever implications may have lurked beneath that remark, the fact is that all our personal contacts, even the most casual, were pleasant. Suppose that, according to the custom of the country, you are negotiating with your cab driver, a difficult feat, when there are linguistic barriers in the way. You ask him his charge to go to such and such a place. He says three rubles. You say one. Then the argument begins and you realize how helpful it would have been if you had begun your Russian earlier. But suddenly a passer-by steps up. "Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" You answer with much confidence: "Ja." You explain to him what you want. He does the arguing for you. The matter is settled for one ruble and with a friendly smile the stranger goes on his



way. This experience happened to us repeatedly. The average Russian is friendly, helpful, and courteous, distinctly likable. We saw no signs of hostility to foreigners, rather quite the reverse.

But four weeks had quickly passed. We decided that the most convenient way of leaving Russia was by the weekly German boat from Leningrad directly to Stettin, Germany, a three day trip on the Baltic. The boats are small, but excellent. There was an unusually large number of passengers, seventy, so the boat came up the river and we were able to leave directly from the pier on the other side of the Neva. No difficulties with the customs. The Society for Cultural Relations had paved the way. At length, the ship dropped off down the river and Leningrad disappeared behind us in the misty rain. We were out of the land of the Soviet and headed back toward the normalcy of ordinary European life.

The narrative ends in the Russian bank in Berlin. A poor old Russian woman whom we had met and talked with on the boat chanced to meet us again there. A pathetic figure in black, of German origin but the widow of a government official of the old régime. At length she had secured permission to leave the country and join relatives in Germany. Her property gone, only a foolish little dog for her intimate companion, her heart filled with grief and bitterness for the losses and the sufferings and the startling changes she had endured, going out now to see whether she could pick up again the threads of life abroad, certainly she could not fail to evoke one's deepest sympathy. As we said good-bye and separated, she threw her arms around the feminine member of our party and then with tears in her eyes wished us "*bonne chance*" and "*bon voyage*." The old régime had been trampled under foot by the new. But had the old régime before the Revolution ever concerned itself seriously with the problems of the people at large? How expect now that the new order with years of Siberia and prison behind it will deal leniently even with the old and helpless remnants of the past? The mills of the gods grind slowly but they do grind, and woe to those who are caught between the millstones.

The old régime in Russia has long since been condemned. Its fruits in tyranny and violence are now prolonged and continue, only with the tables turned, into the new. Not soon does a country, more than an individual, live down its past. But the

present is full of life, it knows what it wants, it is working with grim determination to attain it. More is being attempted for the welfare of the people at the bottom than ever before, even though it is being done with the threat of a mailed fist in the background. Meanwhile the upper classes of society suffer. But as illiteracy, amounting now to sixty per cent or more of the population, disappears, as the economic situation gradually becomes easier, as the local Soviets win for themselves more freedom in opinion and action, it is probable that a more democratic type of government will develop, which will guard what is good in the new régime and slough off the tyranny which is the inevitable product of the past. We must not forget of how many centuries of English struggle our own limited democracy is a product. We must not expect that the Russian people without education, without experience in self-government, could develop a democracy forthwith. A nation's roots are deep in the past. It cannot through a revolution lift itself by its own bootstraps, but it can through such a violent cataclysm release beneficent forces which will triumph in the end.

GEORGE R. HAVENS

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### EDGAR ALLAN POE: THE BUTCHER

Listen: you can hear the noise that hearts make  
When in the silence of a room they break  
Into fragmented memories never to be  
Restored again to pristine unity.  
Listen: you can hear the dissolution  
Of hearts suspended in a hot solution  
Of humours vitrolic with sordidity  
Made valid by love's invalidity.

For they are not inarticulate as we are;  
They have stories wonderful to tell,  
Scorching—unforgettable—memorable—  
Stories whose glow would light the farthest star  
Should they expire in flame on my dying mouth  
No more to voyage north or travel south!

MERRILL MOORE

## A NEW TESTAMENT FOR FLAMING YOUTH

The past decade has brought forth perhaps a dozen new versions or arrangements of the Bible, all of them designed to make 'the Book nobody knows', the Book which everybody shall know. Each revamping of the ancient volume has been accompanied by an alarmed cry against the modernization of the Bible. It is claimed that to alter the venerable phraseology of the classic King James Version will be to destroy the sacredness of the Scriptures, that the desire to make new translations is but another expression of the thirst for novelty so characteristic of this age.

Whatever convictions may attach to such protests, and whatever truth they may contain, certain it is however, that neither the making of separate versions, nor the attempt to render Holy Writ into the vernacular, nor yet the protests against its modernization are new.

The story of the efforts made by zealous scholars of many ages to make the Scriptures accessible to even the meanest plowboy constitutes one of the most absorbing and significant chapters in the annals of English literary history, from the seventh century Anglo-Saxon paraphrase of the shepherd-poet Caedmon to the most recent version of a twentieth century university professor. Nor can the thirst for novelty be adduced as the motivation prompting either to past or to present renderings made by individuals.

One of the most striking of all English translations—perhaps it may claim an undisputed uniqueness—is that made by Edward Harwood of Bristol in 1768. He was no mere novelty seeker, but as a theologian and a classical scholar, well versed in his Plato, his Xenophon, Thucydides, Plutarch, and Ovid, he sought (to paraphrase his own Preface) 'to engage the rising generation to admire and love the sacred classics, now too generally neglected and disregarded by our youth.' He would lead the younger generation to a fresh understanding of the duties, doctrines, and discoveries of the gospel; would teach them to venerate Christianity as the cause of God, of truth, of virtue, of liberty, and of immortality. The idiom of the King James Version is found bald and barbarous. He wished to clothe the divine oracles in the vest of modern elegance—to allure his younger contemporaries to the New Testament by the innocent stratagem of a modern style.

Not only for youth, but also to offset the labors of the voluminous critics, paraphrasts, illustrators, and interpreters—the sinister production of dark and melancholy divines—did Harwood make his translation. (He has in mind the great mass of literature produced by the orthodox-deistic controversy of his time.) It was his purpose to exhibit before the candid, the unprejudiced and the intelligent of all parties the true, original, divine form of Christianity, in its beautiful simplicity, 'divested of all the meretricious attire with which it has been loaded, so that it might excite the admiration, transport and love of every ingenuous and virtuous bosom'.

How well Harwood succeeded in his undertaking, only an examination of the two volumes of his 'liberal and diffusive version' will reveal. Yet a few samples will enable the reader to gain some idea of the way in which he proceeded to carry out his intentions.

The following verses from the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6 : 9-11) as compared with the rendering of the same in the Authorized Version will illustrate the liberal and diffusive tendency of the whole work. There can be no doubt that from this point of view, Harwood's translation was a tremendous success! These verses, too, show the characteristic rationalistic leanings of the author :

#### Authorized Version (A. V.)

Verse 9. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

#### Harwood's Version

9. In order to guard you from mistakes in this important concern I will propose the following as a model for your devotions—O Thou great governor and parent of universal nature—who manifestest thy glory to the blessed inhabitants of heaven—may all thy rational creatures in all parts of thy boundless dominion be happy in the knowledge of thy existence and providence, and celebrate thy perfections in a manner most worthy thy nature and perspective of their own.

A. V.

Harwood

Verse 11. Give us this day  
our daily bread.

11. As thou hast hitherto  
most mercifully supplied our  
wants, deny us not the neces-  
saries and conveniences [*sic*]  
of life, while thou art pleased  
to continue us in it.

To these few specimens may be added further the familiar  
John 3: 16:

A. V.

Harwood

Verse 16: For God so loved  
the world, that he gave his only  
begotten Son, that whosoever  
believeth in him should not per-  
ish, but have everlasting life.

16: For the supreme God  
was affected with such immense  
compassion and love for the hu-  
man race, that he deputed his  
son from heaven to instruct  
them—in order that every one  
who embraces and obeys his re-  
ligion might not finally perish,  
but secure everlasting happiness.

An excellent example of Harwood's verbal tailoring is to  
be seen when he replaces the 'bald and barbarous' garb of Matt.  
6:28, 29 in the vulgar version with his 'vest of modern ele-  
gance':

A. V.

Harwood

Verse 28: Consider the lilies  
of the field, how they grow;  
they toil not, neither do they  
spin: 29, and yet I say unto  
you, That even Solomon in all  
his glory was not arrayed like  
one of these.

28: Survey with attention the  
lilies of the field, and learn from  
them how unbecoming it is for  
rational creatures to cherish a  
solicitous passion for gaiety and  
dress—for they sustain no la-  
bor, they employ no cares to  
adorn themselves: 29, and yet  
are clothed with such inimitable  
beauty, as the richest monarch,  
equalled.



The angelic song in Luke 2:14 exhibits a similar elegance:

A. V.

Harwood

Verse 14: Glory to God in  
the highest, and on earth peace,  
good will toward men.

14: O let the highest an-  
gelic orders hymn the praise of  
God! O what happiness hath  
now blessed the world! O what  
ineffable benevolence is now ex-  
pressed towards men!

The account of Salome's dancing before Herod in Matt. 14: 6 ff and Mark 6: 22 ff, together with several other passages will serve to reveal 'the innocent strategem of a modern style', emotional, realistic, and lurid:

. . . . Herod celebrated his birthday with great pomp and magnificence—on which occasion the daughter of Herodias danced before the company with such inimitable grace and elegance, as gave universal satisfaction and pleasure to the company, and filled Herod with ecstasies of rapture. [Then follows the account of his rash promise and the request of Salome]. . . . A request so unexpected [the head of John the Baptist] filled the monarch with cutting remorse and compunction for his rashness. [The life-guard brought his head on a large dish, swimming in blood. . .]

The shortest verse of the Bible, John 11:35 "Jesus wept", is much too tame for our translator; in his hands it must match in intensity the "swimming in blood" of the above; so we have "Jesus burst into a flood of tears". A like expansive lachrymosity presents itself in the translation of Luke 19:41, where the Authorized Version reads "wept over it" [i. e., the city of Jerusalem] Harwood renders this clause—"the gushing tears streamed down his cheeks".

Lack of space prevents the quotation of a most graphic and intimate relation of the parable of Dives ("a rich voluptuary") and Lazarus ("a most miserable object"), Luke 16:19-31. One might expect the parable of the Prodigal Son to challenge the artistry of the translator to the utmost. Apparently it has done so, for nothing is lacking either in 'elegance' or in vividness that might induce both 'persons of a liberal education and polite taste' and also 'the rising generation' to peruse the tale. For the benefit

of the latter, the preacher has improved every shining opportunity afforded by the narrative. Here too, space allows only a few representative and typical verses, viz: Luke 15: 11, 13, 14, 20, 25, 30, :

II. A GENTLEMAN of a splendid family and opulent wealth had two sons. . . . 13. A few days after, the younger brother converted all the estates that had been thus assigned him into ready money—left his native soil, and settled in a foreign country, where, by a course of debauchery, profligacy, and every expensive and fashionable amusement and dissipation, in a very short time, he squandered it all away. 14. As soon as he had dissipated his fortune, and was now reduced to extreme indigence—a terrible famine visited the country in which he resided, and raged with such dire and universal devastation, that he was in want even of the common necessities of life. . . . 20. Having formed this resolution, he traveled towards home, without clothes and without shoes—with all the haste that a body pining with hunger, and exhausted by fatigue could make— When he was now come within sight of home his father saw him at a distance—knew him—and was subdued at once with paternal tenderness and pity— He rushed to meet him with swift and impatient steps—folded him in his arms—imprinted a thousand ardent kisses on his lips—the tears straying down his venerable cheeks, and the big passions, that struggled in his breast, choking his utterance. . . . 25. In the meantime, while they were thus joyfully celebrating his return—the elder brother was absent in the fields— On his coming home in the evening, when he approached the house, he heard the whole dome resound with vocal and instrumental music, and dancing. . . . 30. [The elder brother says], But no sooner doth this libertine return to you, after having dissipated all the fortune you gave him in the vilest sensuality and debauchery—but you embrace him in an ecstasy of joy—bathe him in a flood of tears—and solemnize the day by a sumptuous and magnificent feast. . . .

The rationalizing tendency, mentioned above, which also laid Harwood open to charges of Socinianism is evident throughout his translation. Yet his intention was to rid the text of unintelligible mysteries and unscriptural absurdities so that the work might appeal 'to cultivated and improved minds, to sceptics, to doubters and to deists'. For example, Mark 1:12,13 thus relates the temptation of Jesus after his baptism:

Soon after this, Jesus in a prophetic dream fancied himself transported into a dreary wilderness: And in this horrid and

solitary desert, he thought [*sic*] he lived among wild beasts, deprived of food for forty days—during all which space, Satan practiced every art to seduce him from his duty—but at the expiration of this period, he thought, the angels came and gave him refreshment.

Instead of the "God is a spirit" of John 4:24, we read "God is a pure and perfect mind". The Unitarian leanings of the translator further show themselves in the manner in which he sets forth the relationships between the Son and the Father: John 1:1,2: Before the origin of this world existed the Logos—who was then with the Supreme God—and was himself a divine person. He existed with the Supreme Being, before the foundation of the earth was laid. Instead of the "I and my Father are one" of John 10:30, we have in Harwood: I and the Deity are united by the firmest mutual ties.

In his Preface, Harwood objected that commentators and the like had labored to make Jesus Christ and his apostles papists, or Lutherans, or Calvinists. A contemporary religious magazine in turn found his translation 'more the New Testament of Dr. Harwood than of the apostles', and described it as 'verbose and affected'. Boswell pronounced it 'fantastic'; and in the Preface to a somewhat later translation by Gilbert Wakefield (1795), the author avows his dislike of 'liberal translations' of the Scriptures, as it seems to him 'a most ignoble ambition to court the sickly tastes of those readers, to whom the native plainness of the Gospels has no relish'. Merely upon the basis of the few extracts here given, the reader may be able to form some judgement as to the correctness of such estimates.

That Harwood made Jesus Christ over according to his predilections should not cause any surprise—every one interested in claiming Jesus for his cause does the same thing. Jesus has played many roles in the course of history since his time, as in the present instance, this inevitable transference of the interpreter's personality into his work constitutes at once the interest and the danger attaching to 'one man' translations. The judgment of a committee or of a company, widely representative of the best of the various types of religious thinking, is apt in the long run to be more consistently dependable and well-balanced than that of any one scholar, however well equipped for his task he may be.

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## WHITMAN AND EMERSON

Of all the transcendentalists, indeed, of all the men with whose literary products Whitman came in contact, Emerson occupied a place that is eminently noteworthy and unique. When one considers the philosophical background of the ideas of our poet of democracy, it is but natural that he should find in them a marked similarity to the expressions of opinion made by the man whom we have chosen, perhaps with doubtful propriety, as the chief and representative figure of the transcendental movement. When one tries to recall the Emersonian adaptations of the traditional conceptions of idealistic philosophy, he finds himself quite readily jumping from the insecure stepping stones of the over-soul theory, the doctrine of compensation, and the belief in an intuitive apprehension of the unity of beauty, goodness, and truth, to the firmer bank of personal and national self-reliance. In turn, when one considers the fundamental principles underlying Whitman's thought, he passes in like fashion from various similar idealistic conceptions to the central preachment of an "athletic democracy", based upon an individual self-reliance so profound that the poet can shout to the stars, "Nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is",<sup>1</sup> and sing of the coarse stuff of human animality as the fine fabric of the soul.

The average reader of *Leaves of Grass* is most impressed by its author's egoism; yet a penetrating critic, who approaches the work from quite another angle, calls this same egoism, "the sublime apotheosis of Yankee self-reliance".<sup>2</sup> Apparently, then, Emerson and Whitman both strove to make manifest the same phase of Romantic individualism.

No critic has failed to note the unusual likeness in thought and expression that marks the work of these two writers, but the problem of accounting for it has been a vexed one. Since the days of the first idolators of the Good Gray Poet a surprising number of readers and commentators have been inordinately zealous in taking up the cudgels to defend their hero from the

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<sup>1</sup> "Song of Myself". Stevenson has noted the truism in this seemingly irreligious statement. See "Walt Whitman", in *Familiar Studies*.

<sup>2</sup> Havelock Ellis, *The New Spirit*, London, n. d., p. 118.



charge of more than a chance indebtedness to the Sage of Concord. It is the purpose of this essay to present the salient facts of the relationship of Whitman and Emerson without any attempt to trace similarities of idea in their writings.<sup>3</sup>

The undeniable Emersonian flavor of the poems included in the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* has been the chief reason for the desire of students of that work to trace its author's contact with the publications of the New England essayist. The importance of establishing the fact that Whitman knew the latter's literary products before 1855 can scarcely be exaggerated, not only because of the varying opinions on that score held by different critics, but because the first edition of the poems, containing as it does the vital sum and substance of its author's doctrine, cannot otherwise be accounted for. Without some such motive force as an explanation for its character, there would be no greater psychological riddle than the sudden metamorphosis of a second-rate Brooklyn journalist, treading the mill of tradition, into a clarion-voiced prophet of Democracy, flaunting the principles of the new spirit in the face of the servants of time-honored custom.<sup>4</sup>

Whitman, of course, was often questioned about the date of his first acquaintance with Emerson's works, but his replies to various interrogators are at variance with one another. J. T. Trowbridge, in giving the substance of a conversation with Walt about the matter, says:

"Whitman talked freely about the subject, that day on Prospect Hill, and told how he became acquainted with Emerson's writings. He was at work as a carpenter . . . in 1854. . . . Along with his pail he usually carried a book . . . . Once the book chanced to be a volume of Emerson, and from that time he took with him no other writer. . . .

<sup>3</sup> For a recent account of some of the similarities, see J. B. Moore, "The Master of Whitman", *Studies in Philology*, vol. 23, 1, pp. 84-85.

<sup>4</sup> "Es ist in höchsten Grade unwahrscheinlich, dass ein Mann von dieser Gefühlsrichtung jemals spontan und aus sich selbst dazu gelangt wäre, plötzlich das Evangelium des Egoismus und Individualismus zu predigen. Wenn sich der befruchtende Einfluss Emersons nicht nachweisen liesse, würde Whitmans neue Richtung als eins der grössten psychologischen Rätsel dastehen", E. Bertz, *Der Yankee-Heiland*, Dresden, 1906, cap. 7, "Emersons Einfluz", p. 115.



He freely admitted that he could never have written his poems if he had not first 'come to himself', and that Emerson helped him to 'find himself'. I also asked if he thought he would have come to himself without that help. He said, 'Yes, but it would have taken longer'. And he used this characteristic expression: 'I was simmering, simmering, simmering; Emerson brought me to a boil!'"<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, Whitman wrote to Kennedy, February 25, 1887, in part as follows:

"It is of no importance whether I had read Emerson before starting *Leaves of Grass* or not. The fact happens to be positively that I had not. . . . If I were to unbosom to you in the matter I should say that I never cared so very much for Emerson's writings, prose or poems, but from his first personal visit and two hours with me (in Brooklyn in 1866 or '65) [He means '55 or '56] I had a strange attachment and love for him and his contact, talk, company, magnetism. I welcomed him deepest and always—yet it began and continued on his part, quite entirely. HE always sought ME. We probably had a dozen (possibly twenty) of these meetings, talks, walks, etc."<sup>6</sup>

As early as 1867 John Burroughs, who was another to whom Walt had been willing to 'unbosom' himself, emphatically declared:

"I take occasion to say that Whitman, up to the time he published the quarto edition here mentioned [1856], had never read the essays or poems of Mr. Emerson at all. This is positively true. In the summer following that publication, he first became acquainted with the *Essays*, in this wise: He was frequently in the habit of going down to the sea-shore at Coney Island, and spending the day bathing in the surf and rambling along the shore, or lounging on the sand; and on one of these excursions he put a volume of Emerson into the little basket containing his dinner and his towel. There, for the first time, he read 'Nature', etc. Two years still elapsed, however, and it was after his second edition was issued, before he read Emerson's poems".<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Reminiscences of Walt Whitman", *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 89, p. 163, (1902).

<sup>6</sup> *Reminiscences of Walt Whitman*, London, 1896, p. 76. The brackets are Kennedy's.

<sup>7</sup> *Notes on Walt Whitman*, as poet and person, pp. 16-17.

So much appears to be evident from these contrary statements, that Walt was Emersonian enough to believe that the great soul has absolutely nothing to do with consistency. It might be urged that he could well have absorbed the ideas of the Concord essayist and poet before 1855, without actually having read Emerson's publications. His newspaper affiliations, which involved considerable book reviewing, would have enabled him to gather much material about such a noted lecturer. As a matter of fact, he did know something about Emerson as a speaker, being interested in him enough to put the following words into one of his early verses entitled "Pictures":

"And there, tall and slender, stands Ralph Waldo Emerson,  
of New England, at the lecturer's desk, lecturing . . . ."<sup>8</sup>

It is not at all improbable that he heard the sage expound his views in person.

In *The Democratic Review* alone, during the period that he himself was one of the contributors, he could have read a ten-page article reviewing "Nature", and including numerous quotations; a fourteen-page account of Emerson's essays, by "a disciple"; a review of his poems covering eight pages;<sup>9</sup> and material filled with incidental references, such as "The Spirit and Tendencies of the New School of Philosophy", and "Unitarian Portraits".<sup>10</sup> In view of the fact that Whitman received no inconsiderable portion of his information through reading magazines, the above-mentioned essays are worthy of consideration. His early notebooks show many indications of an acquaintance with Emersonian doctrines,<sup>11</sup> which might have been obtained from such sources, if, indeed, they were not directly derived. Whitman's remarks before the Brooklyn Art Union, on March 31, 1851, also seem to reflect the brilliant rhetoric of the "Phi Beta Kappa Oration", and the "Divinity School Address".<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> E. Holloway, "Whitman's Embryonic Verse", *Southwest Review*, July, 1925, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> February, 1838; June, 1845; and May, 1847.

<sup>10</sup> Both in 1844. See Kennedy, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

<sup>11</sup> Moore, op. cit., pp. 79-81.

<sup>12</sup> *Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman*, ed. Holloway, vol. I, p. 243, footnote.

The most significant indication of his contact with Emerson's lucubrations prior to 1855, however, seems to be his review of "Spiritual Laws", published in the *Brooklyn Eagle* on December 15, 1847.<sup>13</sup> One can only speculate upon the avidity with which

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, vol. 1, p. 132.

his own style, with its abrupt transition from one oracular sentence to another. Particularly impressive must such thoughts have been as, "What we call obscure condition or vulgar society, is that condition and society whose poetry is not yet written, but which you shall presently make as enviable and renowned as any"; and, "Somewhere, not only every orator, but every man, should let out all the length of all the reins; should find or make a frank and hearty expression of what force and meaning is in him". It is interesting to note the similarity of idea in Whitman's purpose "to get a real human being into a book", as his lowly friend Peter Doyle expressed it.<sup>14</sup>

Another bit of material suggesting the early contact of the singer of the whole man with the Concord pseudo-philosopher is afforded by the poet's note, written, according to his editor, "in the early fifties", which appears on the margin of a magazine article dated May, 1847.<sup>15</sup> Whitman there comments on "the superiority of Emerson's writings".

With the facts just brought out in mind, it is much more reasonable to suppose that the mawkish letter printed in the appendix of the 1856 edition, which hails Emerson as 'Master',<sup>16</sup> was prompted as much by a sentimental gratefulness for a flattering expression of esteem delivered by a revered idol, as by the charlatanism of a self-constituted press agent.

The flattering token of Emerson's appreciation of the poet's merits is, of course, his most gratifying acknowledgement of the receipt of one of the presentation copies of *Leaves of Grass*. The letter, dated July 21, 1855, follows:

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he must have read that impassioned plea for spontaneity, so like

<sup>14</sup> See Whitman's *Complete Prose Works*, Putnam's, 1902, vol. 1, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, vol. 4, p. 159.

<sup>16</sup> The following illustrates its nature: "Master, I am a man who has perfect faith. Master, we have not come through centuries, caste, heroism, fables, to halt in this land today. . . . Those shores you found. I say you have led the States there—have led Me there—" Quoted from Bliss Perry, *Walt Whitman*, second edition, pp. 116-117.

"Dear Sir,—I am not blind to the worth of the wonderful gift of *Leaves of Grass*. I find it the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed. I am very happy in reading it, as great power makes us happy. It meets the demand I am always making of what seems the sterile and stingy Nature, as if too much handiwork or too much lymph in the temperament were making our Western wits fat and mean. I give you joy of your free and brave thought. I have a great joy in it. I find incomparable things, said incomparably well, as they must be. I find the courage of treatment which so delights us, and which large perception only can inspire.

I greet you at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have a long foreground somewhere, for such a start. I rubbed my eyes a little to see if this sunbeam were no illusion; but the solid sense of the book is a sober certainty. It has the best merits, namely, of fortifying and encouraging. I did not know, until I last night saw the book advertised in a newspaper, that I could trust the name as real and available for a post-office.

I wish to see my benefactor, and have felt much like striking my tasks, and visiting New York to pay you my respects. (signed) R. W. Emerson"<sup>17</sup>

The chief significance of this letter, for our purpose, is not the fact that it furnished Whitman with advertising material,<sup>18</sup> but that up to the time of its being written Emerson did not know his Brooklyn admirer personally. However, he felt an eagerness to have the personality of the promising new poet appreciated, and, accordingly, persuaded the young Virginian, Moncure Conway, to visit Whitman.<sup>19</sup> Not long afterward he himself was able to 'strike his tasks' and journey to Brooklyn.

With all his expressions of commendation, Emerson's approbation of the poet's accomplishments was apparently not without reserve. Indeed, in all his relations with Whitman there cropped out that often remarked 'other side' of his nature, which might be attributed to a calculating regard for public opinion, were it

<sup>17</sup> Bliss Perry, op. cit., p. 99. Whitman allowed Dana to publish the letter in the *New York Tribune*.

<sup>18</sup> The second edition bore in great gilt letters upon the cover, "I greet you at the Beginning of a Great Career. R. W. Emerson".

<sup>19</sup> Sept. 17, 1855, Perry, op. cit., p. 119. Conway was probably the first of the group including Alcott, Thoreau, Bryant and others, to call upon the new poet.



not so evident in other connections. At any rate, his initial appraisal of *Leaves of Grass* did not continue to represent his attitude toward that work. His letter to Carlyle, written in the fall of 1856, indicates this.

"One book, last summer, came out in New York, a nondescript monster, which yet had terrible eyes and buffalo strength, and was indisputably American—which I thought to send you, but the book throve so badly with the few to whom I showed it, and wanted good morals so much, that I never did. Yet I believe now again, I shall. It is called *Leaves Of Grass*,—was written and printed by a journeyman printer in Brooklyn, New York, named Walter Whitman, and after you have looked into it, if you think, as you may, that it is only an auctioneer's inventory of a warehouse, you can light your pipe with it."<sup>20</sup>

This letter illustrates a certain aspect of Emerson's attitude toward the "Poet of Barbarism". His parochial New England heritage and his critical faculty, nurtured by classical models, were offended by the utter lawlessness of Whitman's genius; but his poetic spirit, his transcendental belief in the power of Western democracy to assert itself in literature, recognized the sincerity of the overwhelming impulse behind the crudities of expression. In spite of his shortcomings, Whitman seemed to him to possess some, at least, of the characteristics of the Singer of America that he had prophesied in his discourse before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa Society almost a score of years before. In 1863 he noted in his journal, under the heading, "Good out of evil":

"One must thank the genius of Brigham Young for the creation of Salt Lake City. . . . And one must thank Walt Whitman for service to American literature in the Appalachian enlargement of his outline and treatment".<sup>21</sup>

That Whitman, in turn, was appreciative of Emerson's qualities during this period is borne out by the fact that among his effects there were found two carefully treasured newspaper notices of

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<sup>20</sup> *Emerson-Carlyle Correspondence*, 1883, vol. 2, p. 25. Whitman once spoke of this work as "in some respects the most remarkable letters in all English Literature". See *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. 2, p. 195.

<sup>21</sup> *Journals*, vol. 9, p. 540.



the publication of *English Traits*, 1856. One of these is dated in his own hand August of that year. It is important that one should remember this indication of interest, in order to reduce the exaggeration from the many later attempts of the poet to make his contact with Emerson appear casual, transitory, and unimportant.

In the letter to Kennedy quoted in this essay,<sup>22</sup> Walt speaks of having had a dozen, or possibly twenty conversations or walks with his 'Master'. Some years later he informed his devoted friend Traubel that he had met Emerson 'twenty and more times'.<sup>23</sup> The material that deals with these occasions is, unfortunately, meagre and chaotic. However, during the period that he lived in Washington, there was ample opportunity for meetings between the two men, since Emerson's lecturing tours occasionally brought him that far south. The following excerpt of a letter addressed to Dowden, in January, 1872, will illustrate:

"Emerson has just been this way (Baltimore and Washington) lecturing. He maintains the same attitude—draws on the same themes—as twenty-five years ago. It all seems to me quite attenuated (the first drawing of a good pot of tea, you know, and Emerson's was the heavenly herb itself—but what must one say to a second, and even third or fourth infusion?) I send you a newspaper report of his lecture here a night or two ago. It is a fair sample."<sup>24</sup>

The passage just quoted not only proves that Whitman, in turn, was able to depreciate American accomplishments before English eyes, but appears to corroborate the evidence adduced to prove that he was acquainted with Emerson's works before 1855, since it is to be inferred from the above that about 1847 he knew the fundamental doctrines underlying them. Moreover, there is no reason for doubting the accuracy of the date assigned, because the statement is almost unique in having been made prior to the time when mental disintegration consequent upon his paralysis had set in.

From additional evidence dating from the Civil War period we are able to conclude that Emerson's natural ire at seeing his

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<sup>22</sup> See page 4.

<sup>23</sup> *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. 2, p. 230.

<sup>24</sup> Bliss Perry, op. cit., p. 202.

personal letter used to exploit the sale of a work rather dis-  
countenanced by the better reading public, did not result in long-  
continued resentment. He not only supplied Whitman with  
letters to Sumner and Chase, but sent money to aid him in his  
charitable activities among the sick and wounded soldiers.<sup>25</sup>

One incident from a meeting of the two men is given by Edward  
Carpenter, who stayed at Emerson's home for a short time in  
1877. His account of the affair follows:

"When I spoke of Whitman, and asked what he thought of  
him, he laughed (a little nervously, I thought) and said,  
'Well, I thought he had some merit at one time: there was  
a good deal of promise in his first edition—but he is a way-  
ward, fanciful man. I saw him in New York, and asked him  
to dine at my hotel. He shouted for a 'tin mug' for his beer.  
Then he had a noisy fire-engine society. And he took me  
there and was like a boy over it, as if there had never been  
such a thing before!'"<sup>26</sup>

No doubt the New Englander felt the irksomeness of direct  
contact with the merry crowd of firemen, just as he had felt out  
of touch with his parishioners years before, when on one occasion,  
a dying soldier whom he was consoling roused himself and  
shouted, "Young man, go home". It is odd that so many of the  
chief defenders of the idea of democracy have been so prone to  
manifest an irritation when brought into direct relations with  
the *profanum vulgus*.

A further indication of the opinion held by Emerson with  
regard to Whitman's work is afforded by the following passage  
from Burroughs's note book for December, 1870:

"Walt said a friend of his, Mr. Marvin, met Emerson in  
Boston the other day and when Walt was mentioned Mr.  
Emerson said, 'Yes, Walt [?] sends me his books. But tell  
Walt I am not satisfied, not satisfied. I expect—him—to  
make—the songs of the—nation—but he seems to be con-  
tented to—make the inventories.' Walt laughed and said  
it tickled him much."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See the letters included in *Walt Whitman, the Man*, T. Donaldson,  
N. Y., 1896.

<sup>26</sup> *Days With Walt Whitman*, London, 1906, p. 166.

<sup>27</sup> *Life and Letters of John Burroughs*, ed. Clara Barrus, 2 vols., Houghton  
Mifflin, 1925, vol. 1, p. 144.

There seems to be no reason to believe that any motive prompted the gift of the works by their author other than the friendly desire for the approval of the man whom Whitman regarded as 'Master'; although he may have felt obligations to Emerson for his aid in arranging for the publication of some verses in various New England periodicals.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps the most famous of the meetings of the two men took place on the Boston Common in 1861. On this occasion the conversation centered about the advisability of omitting some of the objectionable passages of *Children of Adam* from a projected edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman's account of the matter, written "twenty-one years" later, includes these words:

"Each point of Emerson's statement was unanswerable, no judge's charge ever more complete or convincing, I could never hear the points better put—and then I felt down in my soul the clear and unmistakable conviction to disobey all, and pursue my own way."<sup>29</sup>

In his conversations with Traubel and others the Camden bard insisted again and again that Emerson's objections to portions of his work were made on the ground of expediency and not morality. A typical example is this, "Emerson didn't say anything in the *Leaves* was bad: no: he only said people would insist upon thinking some things bad—"<sup>30</sup> A more complete expression of his idea is contained in the following:

"'Emerson's objections to the outcast passages in *Leaves of Grass*,' said Whitman tonight, 'were neither moral or literary, but were given with an eye to my worldly success. He believed the book would sell—said that the American people should know the book: yes, would know it but for its sex handicap. . . . Emerson's position has been misunderstood: he offered absolutely no spiritual argument against the book exactly as it stood . . . he did not see that if I had cut sex out I might just as well have cut everything out—the full scheme would no longer exist—it would have been violated in its most sensitive spot' "<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. 2, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> *Complete Prose Works*, vol. 2, pp. 26-27.

<sup>30</sup> *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. 3, p. 321.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. 1, p. 50. He, nevertheless, had acceded to Rossetti's request for certain modifications in an English edition of his poems.

Beyond question Whitman longed for the approbation of Emerson more than of any other man; yet he was tormented by the suggestion that anyone should believe him to be a mere reflector of another's brilliance. In 1883, when friends were questioning him about the supposed failure of his quondam 'Master' to follow up his original endorsement of *Leaves of Grass*, and were wondering why their favorite had not been represented among the poets whose products graced the pages of *Parnassus* (1874),<sup>32</sup> Walt began to imagine that his Boston detractors had biassed his former admirer's judgment. To the trusted O'Connor he expressed his fears:

"You hit long ago on the reason why of the Emerson (apparent) change, or defection or cloud—whatever it is to be called—it was the interference, doubtless hard lying, of others,—and there was and is a little knot of my most malignant enemies,—deadly haters,—in and around Boston—some in high quarters—and they plied the man incessantly".<sup>33</sup>

Five years later, however, when Corning asked the old man whether he believed that the Concord litterateur had suffered a change of heart toward his verses, he replied with undeniable emphasis, "I do not consider that Emerson withdrew that first opinion of *Leaves of Grass*".<sup>34</sup> This appears to be corroborated by the circumstances of his visit of 1881, when he sat with rapture in Sanborn's back parlor, content merely to gaze at his beloved idol, and to allow Alcott and the others to carry on the conversation about Thoreau. The next day, September 18, he dined with the Emersons. Although his host's mind was so clouded that he had to be reminded who the grey-bearded visitor was, and his figure exhibited the pitiable frailty of age, his charmed guest always remembered:

"The best of the occasion was the sight of Emerson himself . . . a healthy color in the cheeks, and good light in the eyes, cheery expression, and just the amount of talking

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<sup>32</sup> Burroughs was much annoyed at Emerson's failure to print some of Walt's verses in *Parnassus*. See *Life and Letters*, vol. 1, p. 179.

<sup>33</sup> Bliss Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>34</sup> *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. 1, p. 180.



that best suited, namely, a word or short phrase only where needed, and almost always with a smile".<sup>35</sup>

Walt Whitman's critical powers, so keen in all cases except those in which his emotional egotism was at stake, were frequently called upon to pronounce judgment upon Emerson's value as writer and thinker. His friends, as well as his publishers, were always eager to hear what he had to say about the man whom they, more and more, suspected of being the North Star of his genius. One of the most outstanding expressions of his opinion is to be found in the *Complete Prose Works*,<sup>36</sup> where he speaks of his 'Master' as being too interested in "conceits, polite kinks and verbs", and says in part, as follows:

"Emerson, in my opinion, is not eminent as poet or artist or teacher, though valuable in all those. He is best as critic or diagnoser . . . cold and bloodless intellectuality dominates him. . . . At times it has been doubtful to me if Emerson really knows or feels what Poetry is at its highest, as in the Bible, for instance, or Homer or Shakespeare. I see he covertly or plainly likes best superb verbal polish, or something old or odd . . ."<sup>37</sup>

And then comes this superb tribute:

"The best part of Emersonianism is, it breeds the giant that destroys itself. Who wants to be any man's mere follower? lurks behind every page. No teacher ever taught, that has so provided for his pupil's setting up independently—no truer evolutionist."<sup>38</sup>

Continuing, he reverts to the rankling suggestion of his being a 'mere follower':

"The reminiscence that years ago I began like most youngsters to have a touch (though it came late, and was only on the surface) of Emerson-on-the-brain—that I read his writings reverently, and addressed him in print as 'Master', and for a month or so thought of him as such—I retain not only with composure, but positive satisfaction".<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>*Complete Prose Works*, vol. 2, p. 24. For Whitman's "By Emerson's Grave", see *ibidem*, vol. 2, p. 37 *et seq.*

<sup>36</sup> Vol. 2, p. 265 *et seq.*

<sup>37</sup> p. 270.

<sup>38</sup> pp. 267 and 269.

<sup>39</sup> p. 270.



In view of the other evidence we have on the subject this statement seems a deliberate attempt to minimize the scope of his obligations to Emerson. Yet, to give it its just value, one must remember that the annoying questioning of friends and the open charges of hostile critics seemed to his mind to have erected a straw figure of such proportions that he considered that any means of defense, even a well calculated over-statement, was wholly justifiable. Then, too, Whitman was human enough to be grieved at the failure of his adroit friend to take an open and unequivocal expression of his worth. "I seem", he said, "to have various feelings about Emerson but I am always loyal at last. Emerson gratified me as a young man by what he did—he sometimes tantalized me as an old man by what he failed to do".<sup>40</sup>

The supreme importance of Emerson to Whitman is indirectly suggested by his conversations with Traubel and others, the account of which appears in *With Walt Whitman in Camden*. Of course, due allowance is to be made for the ineptitude of his mental functioning during the period covered (March 28, 1888 to January 20, 1889); and for the fact that the old man knew that his every word was being carefully noted by his attendant. In less than a year he reverted to the subject of Emerson about two hundred times. During his last years he read his favorite from time to time;<sup>41</sup> perused Holmes's memoir,<sup>42</sup> with other similar material; and kept close at hand a portrait of the sage, which he solemnly delivered to Traubel, remarking at the time: "When you looked at Emerson it never occurred to you that there could be any villainies in the world".<sup>43</sup>

At times he was most extravagant in his expression of his 'Master's' merits,<sup>44</sup> not hesitating to mention him with Shake-

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<sup>40</sup> *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, vol. 2, p. 69. The most that Walt would admit in regard to the allegations of Trowbridge and others was that Emerson "was rather silenced than changed", *Ibidem*, vol. 1, p. 111. Just what significance is to be attached to Emerson's calling *Leaves of Grass* "a mixture of the Bhagavadgita and the New York Herald" I am unable to say. See Kennedy, *op. cit.* p. 78.

<sup>41</sup> Vol. 2, p. 416.

<sup>42</sup> Vol. 3, p. 550.

<sup>43</sup> Vol. 2, p. 105.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, vol. 3, pp. 46, 185 and 438.

speare, Bacon, and Milton as being one of "the big names".<sup>45</sup> However, he insisted upon characterizing both Thoreau and Emerson as "a little bookish in their expression of love";<sup>46</sup> and was ready to admit that he had finally decided that Bryant was the greatest American poet. But when forced to acknowledge that the New Englander had been perhaps never wholly democratic, he hastily added, "But I hate to allow anything that qualifies Emerson".<sup>47</sup> He confessed that he loved the man for his personality, and believed that his affection was reciprocated chiefly for something brought "from the rush of the big cities and the mass of men".<sup>48</sup>

What Whitman wished to be remembered as the sum and substance of his relation to Emerson is best illustrated by the account of one of his conversations held in July, 1888. When reminded that he had once addressed the man as master, he replied, "So I did—and master he was for me, then. But I got my roots stronger in the earth..." Immediately thereupon his friend asked, "And when you say your last word about Emerson—just before you shut up shop for good—What will it be?" With a smile upon his face he answered, "It will be loyal: after all impatiences, loyal, loyal."<sup>49</sup>

So it was after all. The fascination conceived for his master years before remained throughout his life, despite the aggravating suggestion that his erstwhile patron had changed his original opinion, a suggestion with undeniable point, in view of the significant omission of any of his verse from *Parnassus*. That he lied about the date of his first acquaintance with Emerson's works cannot be doubted. Why he did so is another matter. One finds that in regard to certain phases of his life and activities there is an absence of fact that cannot altogether be accounted for by the chaotic state of relevant material.

Did Whitman owe more to Emerson than the initial impetus that sent his thoughts on their way; or did he purposely set

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<sup>45</sup> Vol. 2, p. 323.

<sup>46</sup> Vol. 2, p. 52.

<sup>47</sup> Vol. 1, p. 23.

<sup>48</sup> Vol. 1, p. 61.

<sup>49</sup> Vol. 2, p. 69.

about concretizing and enlarging the scope of application of Emersonian doctrines? The difficulty of deciding this, it appears, is bound up with that of determining how much any man can imitate another who preaches, "Trust thyself". A 'mere follower' after a master who bases his thought upon self-reliance and individualism can be imitative by being original. Whitman made out a good case for himself when he remarked, "Emersonianism breeds the giant that destroys itself".

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#### CITY SKYSCRAPER

In this vast edifice, each in his cellule,  
Beings called human work by thumb and rule.  
Busy and active for material ends  
As well as immaterial, each one blends  
His effort and his effortless force to meet  
The point his hands reach for and which his feet  
Merge toward and here strong backs and shoulders wither  
That once were bronzed and bared in jungle weather.

These cubicles of concrete-steel contain  
What once was beaten on by wind and rain,  
What next will be held in by who knows what:  
(I hear no voice so wise that it insists  
In naming the next step in mortal fate)  
Only the flesh, only the flesh persists.

MERRILL MOORE.

## W. S. GILBERT, PRACTICAL CLASSICIST

Sir William Schwenk Gilbert was a Victorian Englishman. He was a business man before he was an artist and a humorist rather than a satirist; he was a realist rather than a romanticist, a sentimentalist rather than a realist; finally, he was a classicist because he was an artist and because he could be neither a realist nor a romanticist. In all this jargon are to be found, definitively, the extent and limitation of Gilbert's achievement as an artist.

As an artist, Gilbert knew that anything extraordinarily obscene or controversial or clownish would distract from the effect of unity in a piece not wholly obscene or controversial or clownish. As a business man, he knew that anything wholly obscene or controversial or clownish would attract only a small and specialized group of a large, potential but prejudicial public. The average man likes to be comfortable, stirred only by soft echoes of sensuous, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual disturbances. As a Victorian, Gilbert was not afraid of compromise for practical reasons.

### I

The satirist is a witty romanticist. He will ridicule a truth seriously because he objects to it; he is less liable than the romanticist to a deep and real faith in other truths than those he rebels against. The humorist will set incongruous truths beside each other for the sake of the incongruity; he will turn truth upside down for the sake of a new point of view. Of wits and ironists he is the classicist. He never goes insane. W. S. Gilbert was in rebellion against nothing definite<sup>1</sup> although, with a kind of classic sense of balance, he saw much that was ridiculous in institutions and conventions essentially wholesome. "Humor is not truth," says Max Eastman,<sup>2</sup> "but truth, under the terms of this elaborate process we call civilised life, is humorous.... A man.... although he may be too fond of his own comfort to at-

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception, of course, of American pirates and an unthinking, uncritical but damning public. *Vide* "Actors, Authors, and Audiences", "Trying a Dramatist", "A Stage Play".

<sup>2</sup> Part I, Chapt. vii, Max Eastman *The Sense of Humor*.

tack the sham and superficialities of man with anger and riot... could not endure them if they were not shot through with acknowledgements to the source and realities of life." Englishmen are not stupid. They know that Truth is not Beauty, nor Beauty Truth. They may not realize generally that truth is humorous and they may have "the curious faculty", described by Chesterton<sup>3</sup>, "of enjoying laughter without seeing what is being laughed at". Theoretically, most of us would object to the idea of laughing at truth, or, at least, at truths. But that instinct to object to laughing at or with truth is part of the humorousness of truth; it is what made people define Gilbert as "satirist".

The realist will tell the truth in detail for the sake of the truth; if he is a reformer like Zola or Upton Sinclair he will indulge himself and his readers in all its ugliness. The romanticist will rebel passionately, imaginatively, against one truth for the sake of another. The sentimentalist will weep over a truth or a lie for the sake of his tears. What imagination Gilbert had was of the sort that orders, rearranges, rather than creates. For that reason, therefore, he borrowed plots from himself, Shakespeare, George Eliot, the French. As a practical man, he carefully restrained whatever passions he may have felt. With his mind, if not with his heart, Gilbert believed in Robertson's reforms and tried to make drama more realistic than it had been until he discovered that audiences of his probationary period were ready only for a realism of mechanics and of tricks; and, consequently, would not pay for descriptions of life as it was. When, later, it was well known that they enjoyed even the ugliness of life, he tried to satisfy them with *The Hooligan*, the last piece he wrote. In his heart he was a sentimentalist and gloried in *Broken Hearts*, *Sweethearts*, *At a Pantomime*. Victorians were not generally sentimentalists. For them, therefore, Gilbert cultivated in himself a curious sense of common sense.

The classicist will compromise between realism and romanticism, reasonably; the only truth for him is his expression of truths. He has an eye and ear for harmony and a special sense for unity, oneness. Being neither romanticist nor realist, but being an artist

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<sup>3</sup>G. K. Chesterton "The Impenetrability of Pooh-Bah", *Liv. Age*, 272:247-9, Jan. 27, 1912.



who felt an inward necessity to write effectively, Gilbert became a classicist inevitably.

## II

In 1874, Gilbert produced *Charity*, in which he made a plea against unthinking intolerance toward a respectable mother of a child whose father was not her husband. Today no one would be interested in *Charity*. Few were in 1874 because, as a matter of fact, the play was thoroughly, even dully Scribe-like. The seduction scene was not presented, and the man who persecuted the woman was so stupidly and conventionally a cad that no one could have sympathized with him had the woman been the most abandoned creature imaginable. "*Charity*, An Original Play" lacked originality.

Still *Charity* was more natural than the plays of Gilbert's early colleagues and the reason was his connection with T. W. Robertson who belonged with Gilbert to the staff of "FUN". Gilbert's insignificance in the repertoire of legitimate drama becomes a cause of surprised wonder if this connection is examined in its native background, the theatre of the 60's, unless one admits Gilbert's personal limitations as a playwright.

English comedy after Sheridan, Victorian comedy, was trashy because it was artificial. Before Robertson, dramatists seem never to have realized that a character in a play may be vivacious and consistent with humanity and "theatricality" at the same time: they forced epigrams and puns into the mouths of the most inept; they made their actors face their audiences stiffly when they spoke; they made their stages as stiff in their furnishings as the actors in their rhetoric; they insisted that, whatever happened before, in the last act, the villain must confess and repent, the parents forgive and relent, the lovers rejoice in consent, the future forbode wild content; finally, they persisted in disregarding differences, if only in dress, between members of one group and those of another—their servants' clothes were as rich as their masters'.

Of a family of the theatre, Robertson was a man of the theatre. The light that never was before his time shone dimly in his eyes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> . . . as in his theatre where he had the courage to introduce gas illumination for the first time; Gilbert's theatre used electricity for the first time in any theatre. These two facts are slightly symbolic of the extent to which each went in the matter of stage management.

His was the "genius of the commonplace".<sup>5</sup> On the night of September 15, 1866, the audience at the first production of *Ours* must have gasped when autumn leaves actually fell from autumn trees on a stage representing Shendryn Park in autumn or when rain was heard, actually, pattering on those leaves at a rainy moment in the plot. When, later, doorknobs actually turned on doors that actually opened, when an actor moved about naturally as he opened his mouth to speak, and when from that opened mouth neither epigram nor pun dropped, theatre-goers must have felt a new, real kinship with stage puppets.

Moreover, Robertson introduced problems, like that of caste, into his plays!

But Robertson lacked the genius of the extraordinary, that of sublimating the breakfast table and its bread-and-butter with a reporter's instinct for proper tragedies, comedies, and symbolisms. He belonged always and only to the theatre and he did not know, therefore, how a duchess ought to talk or act. His villains were essentially villainous, his heroines essentially virtuous, his heroes essentially inane. Each must have the reward he or she undoubtedly deserved. No matter how disconcerting to the poor hero, for example, that gentleman must be raised from his unforgotten Indian grave to rescue the girl from poverty, mother-in-law, or worse, in the last act. Everybody (but the villain, and he sometimes) must be transformed into some amiable relative of the Cheerybles, in the last act.

A tale for someone else to tell is of the playwright who carried on Robertson's mechanical reforms but who, first becoming disgusted with the sentimental excesses of happiness in Robertson's last acts, conceived a lust for something more natural and made his hero kill himself or do something else equally rash. Everyman occasionally thinks of suicide. London saw at once how true to Life this play was. Then, because neither playwright nor audience was longer Victorian, London saw that the suicide was motivated by sexual maladjustments, Freudian complexes originating in wrong environments. Married or not, everyone has sex-longings and is dissatisfied with his position in the ranks of the world. A play with such suggestions was *Life*. London wanted *Life*, then. A Victorian might have denied himself.

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<sup>5</sup> W. Archer, *Old Drama and the New*, p. 260.

Anyway, the epilogue of the tale would be *The American Tragedy* on the right page, and *The Captive* on another.

But such a tale would, of course, be pure fiction. Jones, Pinero, Shaw, Wilde or someone besides Robertson made modern drama what it is. Darwin, Freud, economists, scientists, and "money-makers" were inevitable Gods in their ways; none of these dramatists could have changed creation for any Adam of a Robertson who ever or never lived. Yet Robertson did achieve, and before Pinero or Jones or Wilde or Shaw, modernity in spirit at least. And the tale of the playwright disgusted with Robertson's superabundance of unnatural, final happiness might have been the life-story of W. S. Gilbert, soldier, college graduate, lawyer, theatrical critic, author of the Babs and of short stories, pupil of Robertson and son of William Gilbert, doctor, author, man of many friends and enemies.

In his fragment of an autobiography, Gilbert admitted that he learned stage management from T. W. Robertson, its "inventor." Apparently he was the only one who did. Pinero was only sixteen when Robertson died in 1871, though he later played in *Ours*, helped to "revive" *Caste*, obtained the manuscript notes of a projected Robertsonian play, *Passions*, and paid tribute to Robertson in *Trelawney of the Wells*. Gilbert's most gifted immediate rival, F. C. Burnand, used to attend Gilbert's rehearsals occasionally to gain hints for the production of his own less successful plays and operas. Under the influence of Robertson, too, Gilbert managed to discard H. J. Byron, playwright and editor of "FUN", as his model and to cast aside with him the epigram and pun.<sup>6</sup> Gilbert seems, furthermore, not to have been obsessed with the necessity of a happy ending. He tried his best to kill Point in *The Yeomen of the Guard*.<sup>7</sup> One would have expected him to carry on Robertson's pioneer work.

The difficulty was two-fold. Gilbert was as essentially a sentimentalist as Robertson, as fond of a tear-drawing tragic ending as Robertson of a tear-drawing happy ending. He liked to read the Book of Job, Shakespeare, and Dickens, but he revelled in

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<sup>6</sup>Some of Gilbert's early puns were atrocious, but they are comparatively rare in the operas and comedies. Gilbert, however, always defended the pun theoretically at least.

<sup>7</sup> See particularly Hy. Lytton's *Secrets of a Savoyard*.

beautiful deaths like Vavir's in *Broken Hearts* which Burnand once had the judgment or jealousy to call "Broken Parts". There is never an "overflow of powerful emotion" in Gilbert's work; the dam was too strong or the supply too slight. In striving consciously to be artistic, creative, Gilbert became simply artful. His legitimate plays were likely to be as trashy, rhetorical, well-constructed as Robertson's but never more than Robertsonian and sometimes less.<sup>8</sup>

Though his mind was keen, Gilbert was not a man of ideas and he lacked that indifference to his public which is characteristic of the man who is an artist first and then a success. He wrote, not to earn his bread, for his father's cupboard was full, but to be able to spread the bread with honey. Yearning for success, he dreaded a repetition of the cause of withdrawal of one of his plays, *An Old Score*. In that play, according to Hollingshead who produced it, an accidentally too-realistic passage shocked London of 1869:

There was something wrong about *An Old Score* and I discovered it one night on going into the gallery.... The curtain was down after the scene in which the son roundly abused the father. Two men of the working class, instead of drinking at the bar, were having a dispute. 'I don't care, Bill,' said one, who appeared to have the best of the argument, 'he didn't ought to talk to an old man like that. No matter what he is—he's his father!' That was the solution of the mystery. The piece offended the domestic sentiment of the public!

Hollingshead took the play off the boards almost at once. Gilbert braved London again in 1874, as noted, and then gave up.

Gilbert always insisted that he wrote with "the idea of pleasing everybody who pays for admission to the theatre...on the assumption that the audience is composed of two classes, 'stalls and gallery'." Edith Browne, his first biographer, was hurt by his repeated assertions that he wrote for money. She made brave attempts to prove that he wrote for some other reason. But one of his greatest satisfactions was the amount of money his "art" had yielded him. He bequeathed £110,971 to a posterity not his own. As Burnand takes pains to point out, neither

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<sup>8</sup> His most vaunted play was *Sweethearts*!

Sheridan Knowles, Bulwer Lytton, Douglas Jerrold, T. W. Robertson, Tom Taylor, Oxenford, Watts, Phillips, Bayle Bernard, the Broughs, Frank Talfourd, H. J. Byron, Reece, Halliday nor F. C. Burnand, himself, thought of making what Gilbert made with the Savoy operas after they were established and special terms had been arranged for him and Sullivan.

Whereas, then, Gilbert seemed to be missing an opportunity in one department of dramatic work, he was grooming himself to seize a more suitable one in another.

### III

To describe the intrinsic merit of the Bab Ballads, enhanced by the Bab illustrations, and of the Songs of a Savoyard, enhanced by Sullivan's music in addition to the illustrations, is beyond the scope of this paper. Besides, their characteristics are well known even though occasionally misunderstood. They are Gilbertian but not inimitable. As a matter of fact, there is a sameness in them, as in the opera plots, which invites imitation. Newman Levy in "The Ballad of Bill's Will" has reproduced most of the qualities generally considered Gilbertian. Lewis Carroll's verses are as funny in their way as Gilbert's in his. And Thomas Hood's and Edwin Lear's are nearly as funny.

The fact that arrests attention is not that Gilbert's verses are imitable or inimitable but that the operas of which the songs are a part and to which the ballads contributed have not been rivalled or surpassed.

### IV

Most commentators have subordinated or failed to see the main reasons for librettists' having never maintained or even reached Gilbert's position in the comic opera world. They have not seen fully the importance of his sense of unity and have disliked calling him an opportunist. As a matter of fact, no man learned his lesson to better purpose than Gilbert or better understood that purpose. The Victorian public was not ready for Life, if, indeed, any public ever would be. His serious plays were easily forgotten. Even his serious Babs were liked only by Edith Brownes although Gilbert may not have understood consciously that the reason was their sentimentality. He came to the sound conclusion that his forte was *fantasie*, that, if he were master of



anything, he was master of rime, simple rhythms, and topsyturvydom; colorful, whimsical, a world of "sense upsidedown" as of nonsense. He could do little with new ideas because he was not a thinker—publicly at least. But he could play with commonplaces brilliantly and syncopate ordinary phrases, old ideas and situations. He wanted to do something greatly serious, but he was a capable business man and, because he was willing to sacrifice art for business, he made an art of business.

His creed became so classically simple that no successor has been brave enough to follow it: Platitudes are universals; harmony, rather unity, of parts is essential to a perfection of a whole. He created a succession of triumphs—*Trial by Jury*, *The Sorcerer*, *H. M. S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *The Mikado*, *Ruddigore*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *The Gondoliers*—simply by making use of all his approved talents, profiting by all his early experiences and new opportunities, and restraining any emotion or ambition that might distract from an achievement of one-ness in each successive opera.

His experiences had always been remunerative. For the Babs which first made Gilbert known and called Sullivan's attention to him, "FUN" paid well. Otherwise, Gilbert might never have written them. "PUNCH" refused them. "FUN" paid well for the pen-sketches which illuminated the Babs or Gilbert might never have drawn them. About the time John Hollingshead invented the phrase, "the sacred lamp of burlesque", burlesques paid well. For that reason Gilbert wrote several which were generally neither better nor worse than those of his contemporaries. He must have noted what was obviously a fact, that burlesque choruses had nothing whatsoever to do with their plots but that they were potential dramatically and musically.<sup>9</sup> He may have

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<sup>9</sup>Reform in the matter of choruses had been suggested by "FUN" in the 60's. In the issue of Aug. 3, 1867, was a humorous poem explained by a humorous letter under the title "Chor-ius and Curious": "Unfortunately most choruses—the singable ones at least—have no meaning whatever, and no connection with the song they are attached to". And in the issue of April 11, 1868, appeared the Bab "Trial by Jury" with its appropriate chorus of "Counsel, Attorneys, and Populace" (later to become counsel, bridesmaids, jury, in the opera) and its appropriate refrain "Trial la law".

noticed, too, that the Eve-like simplicity of the girls<sup>10</sup> directed interest from the opera as an organism of girls and other things. He may have felt, therefore, that a resolve that "no lady of the company should be required to wear a dress that she could not wear with absolute propriety at a private fancy ball" would assist the unity of the piece and possibly draw to the theatres Victorians who might otherwise distrust that respectable institution.<sup>11</sup> Because of his association with Robertson and his personal experience as director of his own early plays and burlesques and as official dramatic critic of "FUN", Gilbert could not have helped knowing that he was the most capable play-director in England after Robertson's death.

Strengthened and hardened by these experiences, Gilbert made the most of his opportunities. He retained as his manager the willing and far-seeing D'Oyly Carte, who allowed him full authority in the production of the operas and as a consequence he behaved like a martinet at the Opera Comique and Savoy theatres. He soon made his choruses as integral a part of the opera as the principals. W. Sichel<sup>12</sup> gave him the title of "English Aristophanes" partly because his choruses recalled the function of the Greek chorus. "Stars" were discouraged from shining; consequently, singers with extraordinary voices were never hired; "gags" were forbidden; encores were limited (and verses were written for songs to be used as encores so that the

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<sup>10</sup> "When Sullivan and I began to collaborate, English comic opera had practically ceased to exist. Such musical entertainments as held the stage were adaptations of Offenbach, Audran, Lecocq. The plots had been generally "Bowdlerized" out of intelligibility, and when they had not been subjected to this treatment, they were frankly improper, whereas the ladies' dresses suggested that the management had gone on the principle of doing a little and doing it well".—Gilbert's speech at the O. P. Club, Dec. 30, 1906.

<sup>11</sup> If Gilbert were a Puritan he was probably a practical one and objected to lack of decency in dress on artistic rather than moral grounds as far as the operas were concerned. He never disapproved, I think, of Sullivan or Cellier, Bohemians, although he seldom joined them in their diversions. But then he was married. It is a matter of record that he championed the cause of one of his actresses whose new husband's noble parents disapproved of her. But then, of course, Gilbert may have known that she really loved him.

<sup>12</sup> W. Sichel, "English Aristophanes", *Liv. Age*, 271: 747-54, 778-87, Dec. 23, 30, 1911.

plot-flow might not be hindered); each member of each chorus had to show that he or she was alive to the well-being of the piece by doing the part wholeheartedly, though never conspicuously, even in long and tedious rehearsals; even principals were prohibited from side-plays, while other principals were busy with important roles; no principal or chorister was ever to let his eye stray from the center of interest at any moment or, therefore, to look directly at the audience unless some exigency of the plot so demanded; horse-plays and red noses were tabooed for the obvious reason that they were too obvious; for the same reason, principals were never allowed to let the audience see that they knew they were funny even in the most ridiculous parts. Theoretically and practically, Gilbert had made the opera as an entity more important than any power in it.

In the role of Bab again, Gilbert used his pen to design the scenery and costumes, each detail of which was carefully observed by those who supplied him. He also arranged his stage, determining in advance the exact position of each "prop", principal, and chorister at any moment in the plot. He was careful about details. An actor, rehearsing *Pinafore*, noted that one of the ship's ropes was out of place and bet with another that when Gilbert arrived at the theatre he would not begin rehearsal until the rope was replaced. He won the bet.

Gilbert appealed to popular prejudices when he wrote *The Lie of a Lifetime*, his single political polemic; to be explained by the facts that dislike for Louis Napoleon and his deceit towards his "*Paradise of Fools*" was obviously "the thing" and was made much of by "FUN" which paid for the poem. It is cold and not very witty. Now he took pains to describe his operas as wholly and natively English. The musical stage had been crowded with adaptations from the French and Italian to such an extent that not only were English actors displaced by foreigners but English plays were condemned practically before they were seen. (Incidentally, foreign voices do not harmonise well with native voices as the Rupert Carte Gilbert-Sullivan Victrola records show: there is discord in word accent and in enunciation). Gilbert felt the growing resentment against such a condition although he himself had adapted a piece or so from the French. It paid well. He nursed, therefore, the more honest and ambitious interest of Arthur Sullivan, a composer of so much promise in the early

70's that musical critics prophesied he would one day give England a national music.<sup>13</sup> Together, they resolved that only native actors should participate in their operas, a resolution which they found not always to be practical to remember. They obtained the services of such well-known men of ability as George Grossmith and Rutland Barrington. Their theatre group was itself a harmonious whole until that day when Gilbert so far forgot his own interest as to squabble over a carpet.

At the same time, Gilbert was careful to appeal to no antagonizing prejudices and, therein, rouse distractions. From its early form, *The Princess*, Gilbert's *Princess Ida* developed into popularity so long after Tennyson's poem, "The Princess", of which it was a "respectful perversion", that everyone was used to the idea of feminism; moreover, Gilbert was so lightly indecisive that I am not sure whether he disapproved of Mary Wollstonecraft's spiritual descendants or not. I know what his father thought about them and Catholics and quack doctors and things in general. But Gilbert was either cautious or non-combative. So the clergymen of "The Rival Curates" became aesthetes in the similar plot of *Patience*, and then only after the doom of the aesthetic movement had been welcomed. His "satire" of English patriotism was too accidental to be offensive or even effective. Gilbert was possibly the descendant of Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh! He had once rejoiced in his uniform of officer in the Gordon Highlanders and "when the South African War broke out, Gilbert remembered he was an old soldier and volunteered for service and he was bitter and indignant when he was rejected on account of his age—he was then sixty-three. However, he financed a younger man, who, without help, would have been unable to volunteer".

Gilbert was a humorist rather than that more challenging person, the satirist. He does not distract attention from the opera by a challenge of the mind. If he ever was an operatic satirist, his satire was conventionally mild and accidental. He could not help it if his countrymen preferred to think he was ridiculing the Japanese instead of telling them incongruous truths about himself and them. The administration of W. H. Smith, landsman, as

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<sup>13</sup> Sullivan's letters to his mother show that he was not unaware of an ambition to create a national music.



First Lord of the Admiralty was happy. Ugly Katishas have been stock characters with Aristophanes, John Gay, Sheridan, to say nothing of Gilbert. "FUN" is full of light satires of literary styles, romantic like that of Coleridge in "The Ancient Mariner" and Scott in "Marmion" or sentimental like that of the once popular song, "I'd be a Butterfly". On the staff of "PUNCH", even Thackeray condescended to parody. Gilbert's burlesque of *Hamlet* (*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*) is much like Thackeray's projected burlesques of himself and Dickens. Gilbert objected to Shakespeare as much as Thackeray objected to himself. He wrote "Unappreciated Shakespeare" regretting the laziness that made intelligent people attend distorting stage productions of Shakespeare's plays rather than read the plays themselves for their own sakes. And in 1864 he was incensed enough to publish a protest in "FUN" ("Unmanly Outrage") against Shakespeare's bust being dishonored by boys who thrust cigarettes into its stone mouth and cocked hats on its stone head. A difference in spirit between Gilbert's and the boys' burlesque makes one offensive and the other inoffensive. And it is something of the boys' spirit that makes wit satire. Gilbert is seriously satiric only when he writes wittily about play "pirates" or unsympathetic critics.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Footnote 1. And in one of the *Comic Physiognomist Sketches* ("Comic Physiognomist Concludes" "FUN" Mar. 5, '64, 252) Gilbert lets himself go: "To tell the truth, he (The C. P.) has a very poor opinion of the public as a mass. They are but a flock of sheep who go whither they are driven, who applaud that which they are told to applaud, and who hiss that which they are obliged to hiss. As to presuming to judge for itself, no British public was ever guilty of such indecency except on the following occasions: 1. The first night of a new English opera where everybody is encored in everything and all the artists are called before the curtain at the end of each act, and MR. A. F. has a conservatory of bouquets shied at his respectable head. Nevertheless the opera is usually withdrawn in about a fortnight. 2. The first night of a play when they applaud everything including jokes which the author himself never contemplated and then afterwards (having been told by the critics that it is bad) hiss it off the stage and wont hear it again at any price. 3. A music hall Comic Song (Comic....Ha! ha! but no matter)" etc. This is an expression partly of real feeling, satire, partly of theatric cant, I suspect. Gilbert's more often repeated assertions that he wrote for the public are as real an expression of his attitude. There is only a superficial contradiction between this statement and that quoted on p. 7.



He continued to write about policemen, sailors, gondolieri, pirates, English peers, and bewigged jurists because there was nothing sacred about any of them and, if one forsakes them, there are few types left with characteristically presentable and picturesque uniforms essential to comic opera. "Borria Bungalee Boo's" would not be suitable! And Gilbert could write about pirates! He had been kidnapped by brigands in Italy and humanely ransomed for twenty-five pounds! He had been a soldier and a lawyer and he loved both professions. That he had respect for the right to preserve property is proved by his rather numerous English lawsuits and his struggles with American "pirates". It follows that he respected those who preserved property. Still he knew, or could easily imagine with only a slight knowledge of human nature, that soldiers sometimes sneer and boast; that clergymen, like Elmer Gantry, are sometimes interested in more than dogma and conversions; that pirates sometimes have tender spots in their hearts, that lawyers are sometimes pompous sophists, and that peers, being essentially noble, make excellent villains.

What his "satire" amounted to, then, was a placing of such intimate details as those enumerated beside others equally well known in a thoroughly whimsical, novel, incongruous fashion that soon became amazing.<sup>15</sup> Ordinary truths were syncopated so that they seemed new in much the same way that "A Song of Love" grew out of Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony". They were verisimilar enough to be recognizable as truths. Serious Englishmen were in the difficult position of being forced to laugh at truths or to deny truth! Yet who or what could be offended if they laughed? Those who thought clearly and those who did not think at all enjoyed the operas. Truth was ridiculous even when not an objectionable truth.

In the 90's when audiences began to tire of a too steady diet of Gilbert-Sullivan, Gilbert lost some of his self-restraint in a frenzy to regain his public. *Utopia Limited* and *The Grand Duke* show a rather conscious use of tricks that before had been popular. Extraordinary rimes, for example, are more than plentiful; they

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<sup>15</sup> "I have no notion what Gilbertian humour may be. It seems to me that all humour, properly so-called, is based upon the quasi-respectful treatment of the ridiculous." Gilbert quoted by P. Fitzgerald in *The Savoy Opera and the Savoyards*.

attract attention to themselves away from the rest of the too long piece. Gilbert had lost his file. His work was done.

Of course, calling Gilbert names, a classicist and a humorist rather than a realist or a satirist, does not explain everything; although, as we have seen, it explains a good deal. He was clever, witty, wise, practical. He was a hard worker. But he was also lucky. He found an immediate custom for his wares. "FUN", "The GRAPHIC", "LONDON SOCIETY", and other magazines began publication about the time he began to write. New theatres were being built because there was a new demand for them; the Gaiety, for example, opened in 1868 with Gilbert's *Robert the Devil*, a burlesque. Gilbert was already well-known before he began his best work. And he had become well-known so easily that his self-confidence received but one jolt, that when "PUNCH" rejected one of the Babs. Gilbert never forgave "PUNCH".<sup>16</sup>

And then he had Sullivan to work with! One can imagine a librettist with as much wit and skill as Gilbert. But he might be lazy. And he certainly would search long before he found so sympathetic a supporter as Sullivan who had not only as keen a sense of humor as Gilbert had but probably one more refined, who complemented him in every way, and who was already known, even powerful, musically and socially, before the collaboration.

Posterity, excepting idolatrous biographers, have been as kind to Gilbert as his own generation was. The heirs to his copyrights have been careful to preserve the classic traditions he established. The result is that in England under Rupert Carte, even in America under Winthrop Ames, the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan are still as tickling a harmony of fun as exists on the musical comedy stage. Between then and now, musical comedy has retrogressed to its pre-Gilbertian state, its potentialities as a satiric form still untried, its tried practicability as a classic art form neglected.

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<sup>16</sup> When Frank Burnard became its editor on the death of Tom Taylor, Gilbert said to him, "I suppose you do get some good jokes sent in from the outside occasionally?" "Oh, yes!" agreed Burnard, "Heaps!" Then said Gilbert, "I wish to goodness you would use some of them."

## ABERCROMBIE'S VIEW OF POETRY<sup>1</sup>

Lascelles Abercrombie is a poet, a professor of English literature (at the University of Leeds), and a writer on the principles of literature. His view of poetry is set forth mainly in three books: *The Theory of Poetry*, *The Idea of Great Poetry*, and *Romanticism*. Two other books by him also have a bearing on my subject, namely, *An Essay Towards a Theory of Art* and *Principles of English Prosody*. Abercrombie owes something to Aristotle, Bacon, Kant, and Croce. Perhaps he owes most to Croce, although he claims to owe most to Aristotle. He holds that practically all that has permanent value in Croce's theory is implied in Aristotle.

But although Abercrombie acknowledges a debt to his predecessors, he attempts to deduce his principles mainly from poetry itself and from common sense. His treatment is fresh, simple, and vigorous; and as compared with Croce he is remarkably concrete. According to his own statement, his theory of poetry is not strictly a theory at all, but rather a reasoned presentation of "what poetry is in fact—the things it does and the way it does them."<sup>2</sup>

In the body of this article, I merely attempt to set forth Abercrombie's ideas, and that largely in his own words. Where I am not quoting, I am likely to be paraphrasing. At the end of the article, however, I offer certain implied criticisms in the form of questions.

Poetry is "the expression of imaginative experience, valued simply as such and significant simply as such, in the communicable state given by language which employs every available and appropriate device."<sup>3</sup> Imaginative experience is actual experience that has deepened and widened and become transformed in the

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<sup>1</sup> In its original form this article was read as a paper at the meeting of the Modern Language Association at Louisville, in 1927.

<sup>2</sup> *The Theory of Poetry*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1926, p. 13. The American edition, which I shall cite throughout the article, contains the two books published in Great Britain as *The Theory of Poetry* and *The Idea of Great Poetry*. The last-mentioned covers pages 173-338.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

poet's mind. Shakespeare's sonnets do not express actual experience but imaginative experience. What Shakespeare's actual experience was does not matter, so far as the artistic value of the sonnets is concerned. When language "not only conveys ideas or the way things happened, but can make those ideas enact themselves in imagination as sensuous and emotional experiences, or can turn the way things happened into the very sense of their happening: when language does this, we recognise that we have poetry before us."<sup>4</sup> The art of poetry endeavors to make language not so much the vehicle of thought as the equivalent of experience. Prose describes what is going on in the writer's mind. Poetry imitates the poet's experience; that is, poetic language makes the reader accept as his own the experience of the poet.

Poetry is unique in scope and influence. "For outside poetry anything like the *art* to which poetry owes its existence is utterly unknown—the art or system of contrivances whereby experience can be transferred whole and unimpaired, in all its subtlety and complexity, from one mind to another."<sup>5</sup> Poetry "penetrates deeper, mixes more intimately into our lives, than any other art, because the vehicle of its power is language; and language is the very faculty of spiritual existence in this world, as well as the means whereby human ability transacts its affairs."<sup>6</sup> And yet, even the art of poetry cannot perfectly convey imaginative experience, for imaginative experience is infinitely variable, whereas language is not.

How did poetry come into being? "What we do desire, and what we cannot spiritually exist without endeavouring to have, is a world into which nothing, not even evil itself, can come except in the interests of the whole, as a tone necessary for the establishment of fullest harmony."<sup>7</sup> In poetry, and to a lesser extent in the other arts, our desire creates this harmonious world. In poetry we create an organized, complete, and ideal world—ideal in the sense that it is the highest expression of our desire. The ideal world of poetry is not necessarily a world without evil: it is a thoroughly intelligible world—a world in which everything, even evil itself, is significant. And "a significant world is one in

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.



which nothing happens out of relation with the whole of things, in which everything must perfectly cohere with the rest and nothing can occur irrelevantly. . . . . That is the world of desire; and that is the world we never quite get—*except in art.*"<sup>8</sup>

The function of poetry is of course closely related to the origin of poetry. The function of poetry is implied in "the profoundest aphorism ever contributed to the theory of art—Bacon's assertion that in poetry we have 'the shows of things submitted to the desire of the mind.'"<sup>9</sup> That is to say, poetry helps us to create the desired orderly, intelligible, and significant world out of the chaos presented to the senses.

Poetic beauty is simply "the judgment of delighted approval, when language, by every power it possesses as sense and sound, compels us to live in experience which has its value manifest on the face of it, and which without argument securely establishes its significance."<sup>10</sup> Poetry that satisfies the reader is judged to be beautiful. Even the villainy of Iago is beautiful, in the sense that it is masterly villainy and has significance as such. It is not beauty that stirs the poet's imagination, but meaning, significance. Beauty is the result of the successful expression of significance. "In a poem, our sense of the significance of things comes full circle, and, while we remain in the poem, is complete. We possess a self-sufficient and self-contained satisfaction, and we are delighted with the consciousness of a world which is boundaried and rounded perfection of accord with itself."<sup>11</sup> This sense of satisfaction or delight is what we mean by poetic beauty.

Pure poetry is a question-begging term. "What is pure poetry? What but the poetry which expresses pure experience? And that simply means—*experience itself*: Experience valued merely as such, in and for itself, without having to rely on any external judgment of truth or morality or utility. . . . . But where are its boundaries? There are none."<sup>12</sup> A proposition in Euclid might be the subject of a poem, if the truth of the proposition came to the poet as a glowing and significant experience. And Empedokles is a poet, as well as a philosopher, because he makes us feel or ex-

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<sup>8</sup>*An Essay towards a Theory of Art*, p. 103.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>10</sup>*The Theory of Poetry*, p. 170.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 220.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 179.



perience what it is like to be a philosopher of his type. He makes his philosophic imaginative experience ours.

Poetry is inspired in the sense that a poem has "a unique motive of its own, working itself out into the general shape of the poem and into all the details of the technique."<sup>13</sup> The inspiration or motive is equivalent to what the subject-matter *means* to the poet. The first law of poetics is that the greater the poet's inspiration, the more art he will require in communicating it.<sup>14</sup> We may of course detest the poet's inspiration even though we admire his art.

Poetry has charm, magic, the power of enchantment. "The magical infection of our minds with the poet's mind by means of language, is the first thing poetry must be capable of, in order to exist at all."<sup>15</sup> But language cannot be magical unless there is purpose in its magic. Poetry differs from other literature in this that it does not merely tell what a man has experienced, but it makes his very experience itself live again in our minds by means of the incantation of its language.

Technique is the symbolic expression of the poet's imaginative experience—symbolic because language is symbolic. "We must *hear* what the poet has to say; if we are reading to ourselves, we must hear it mentally. Otherwise we shall miss the technique; and that means, we shall miss half of what he is trying to express."<sup>16</sup> The governing principle of technique is communication. To a great poet, technique has become largely second nature. Technique is a very important matter, for a poem becomes a poem only after it has been successfully communicated. (In this whole matter of technique Abercrombie is of course diametrically opposed to Croce.)

Metre is more expressive than free rhythm. The rhythm of poetry should follow a metrical pattern, but there should be variations to correspond with the variations of thought and feeling. Free verse loses rather than gains by freeing itself from metrical patterns; for metrical rhythms are continuous, whereas free rhythms are not. Metrical rhythm, then, lends a certain unity, as well as a certain heightening of emotion, that free verse and prose

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<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 34, 326.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 118.

are not likely to have. Poetry can, however, exist without metre. Poetic rhythm expresses the exaltation of the poet's imaginative experience.

One of the principal requirements of great poetry is range of subject-matter. Range may imply intensity or compactness, as well as scope or richness. The greatest poetry is that which represents something like the whole gamut of possible experience. "We could not call poetry great which did not face the whole fact of man's life in this world, its wickedness and misery as well as its nobility and joy."<sup>17</sup> It follows that, other things being equal, a long poem is greater than a short one. (Croce, on the other hand, holds that there are no degrees in art.)

Another requirement of great poetry is "intellectual form" or the "organization of its matter—and that, remember, is the evil as well as the good of life—into some consistent shapeliness or coherent unity of final impression."<sup>18</sup> The organization or intellectual form of a poem is a necessary contribution to the meaning, for it conveys the peculiar unity of significance which the matter had attained in the poet's mind. (Intellectual form does not include technique; technique is "instrumental form.") We may of course acknowledge the greatness of the "peculiar unity of significance" of a poem even though we do not accept the poet's view of life or his ideas in detail. It follows from Abercrombie's emphasis on intellectual form that for him the whole of a poem is greater than any of its parts. The great lyrical passage about Helen in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* becomes still greater when it is considered as a part of the whole drama. The beautiful passages of the *Divine Comedy* become still more beautiful when read as parts of the great epic. If the *Divine Comedy* is a great poem at all, it is great as a whole. (Much of this is directed at Croce, who holds that the *Divine Comedy* is poetry only in spots—in the lyrical passages.)

The third requirement of great poetry is vivid and significant characterization. The world has regarded as supremely great those poems which collect their whole sense of life into the behavior and spirit of memorable personalities, such as Hamlet, Milton's Satan, and Dante himself in the *Divine Comedy*. "The art of

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<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 278.

poetry, in its widest sense, can do nothing more impressive than the creation of human character."<sup>19</sup> The greatest poetry requires the kind of significance given by representative personalities—personalities that live in our minds as characteristic of the main aspects of human nature. Examples are Job, Prometheus, Hector, Achilles, Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, Milton's Satan, Faust. Sometimes the poet himself is the character portrayed. This is so, for instance, in the epics of Lucretius and Dante. "The whole process of events in the poem [the *Divine Comedy*] is the process of the spiritual experience of Dante himself: and out of it all emerges the personal man, who takes on himself the demand that destiny shall be just, and satisfies the demand by *understanding* the act of destiny as the act of justice."<sup>20</sup>

Poetry of interpretation is greater than poetry of refuge or escape, because only the former tries to accept unflinchingly the whole of life as it is. Spenser's allegory and Blake's mysticism are examples of the poetry of refuge or escape. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth are among those who have given us poetry of interpretation. The ultra-romantics are poets of refuge or escape.<sup>21</sup>

In general, I have found Abercrombie's discussions of poetry both stimulating and enlightening. I believe that he is seldom entirely wrong, but that he often exaggerates. Possible objections to his doctrine have presented themselves to me in the form of certain questions. I offer them to the reader for what they are worth.

1. Is Abercrombie right in saying that the poet's imaginative experience is necessarily organized and harmonized? 2. May not painting, for instance, "transfer experience whole and unimpaired" almost as easily as poetry may do it? 3. Is the world of poetry always the world of our desire? Is it not sometimes a thoroughly realistic world? 4. Granting that Bacon's aphorism contains a great deal of truth, is it sufficiently comprehensive to explain the origin and function of all kinds of poetry? 5. Is

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 337.

<sup>21</sup> I have summarized Abercrombie's idea of romanticism in my review of his book *Romanticism* in the July-September (1928) issue of the *Sewanee Review*.

poetic beauty invariably "the judgment of delighted approval"? 6. Is it clarifying to call all good poetry pure poetry? Would it not be better to get rid of the term *pure poetry* entirely? 7. Is Abercrombie justified in using the word *art* as he does in the following sentence: "The greater his [the poet's] inspiration, the more art he will require"? Is he not here narrowing the word *art* in such a way as to make it practically equivalent to technique? 8. Is metrical rhythm always more expressive than free rhythm? What about the poetry of the Old Testament, for instance? 9. Is Abercrombie entirely fortunate in using the term *intellectual form* as equivalent to organization or harmony of conception? Does not the word *form* generally have a somewhat narrower connotation? 10. May not poetry be truly great without creating great characters? 11. Does not Abercrombie base his theory of poetry almost exclusively on great poetry, rather than on poetry in general?

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### SOME VICTORIAN NOVELISTS

THE BRONTË SISTERS. By Ernest Dimnet. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company. Pp. 256.

GEORGE ELIOT AND HER TIMES. By Elizabeth S. Haldane. New York: D. Appleton Company. 1927. Pp. 326.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE. A Commentary. By Michael Sadleir. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1927. Pp. 432.

LETTERS OF GEORGE GISSING. Collected by Algernon and Ellen Gissing. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company. 1928. Pp. 414.

GEORGE MEREDITH. By J. B. Priestley. New York; Macmillan Company. 1926. Pp. 204.

ÆSTHETICS OF THE NOVEL. By Van Meter Ames. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1928. Pp. 221.

Whether or not this age still reads the Victorian novelists, it certainly reads about them: a sheaf of recent biographies and critical studies deals with them. From the birth of Charlotte Brontë in 1816 to the death of George Meredith in 1909 almost a century is spanned, but the work of the five novelists whose

names head this review falls within that mighty, much-labelled Victorian era which, being dead, yet speaks in their voices.

The story of the Brontë sisters has fascinated generations of readers, from Mrs. Gaskell's faithful if fumbling biography of Charlotte to the latest psychological study of Emily by a young English woman-novelist. Among all these books, Ernest Dimnet's *The Brontë Sisters*, recently translated from the French, is unsurpassed for its clarity of outline, keenness of judgment, and withal, its sympathy. Like M. Maurois, the Abbé Dimnet has used the method of art rather than of discussion, but unlike him, he has not mingled fiction with fact. Simply and poignantly he has retold the story of those "poor souls bruised by their short lives and driven back within themselves". In his story, centered on Charlotte and her work, the conditions of the age play little part, for, as he perceives, the real home of these lonely spirits was their moors. But he notes the effect on all three of their struggles with that gloomy Calvinism that seared George Eliot's soul, and he ascribes Charlotte's provincialism and moral narrowness to the influence of the cold Yorkshire village. Courageous and tender in her life, she was sometimes unjust and bitter in her novels, as in her treatment of Catholicism and of Mme. Héger in *Villette*. Of her feeling for M. Héger and her recently revealed letters to him, M. Dimnet writes with discerning tact; and from his verdict, "she was as pure as she was impassioned", there can be no dissent. "In her life—as an artist as well as a woman—there remains always something eternally frustrated, which shadows our thoughts of her." Alien as are the extravagances of *Jane Eyre* to a French critic, he recognizes that her genius triumphs over Romantic formulas; and, in characteristic phrase, sums up her place in literature: "In fact, this little woman wrote very great English."

George Eliot, M. Dimnet reminds us, was only three or four years younger than Charlotte Brontë, but separated from her by a century, owing to her command of all resources of culture. Inevitably, then, a modern estimate of George Eliot involves a study of the relation of her work to the main currents of mid-Victorian thought. Such a study is Miss Haldane's. No eminent Victorian better deserves re-interpretation than George Eliot. "In her life," says Miss Haldane, "she was admired,



doubtless to excess; since her death she has been depreciated, certainly with injustice." Like Queen Victoria, George Eliot lived her later years in an atmosphere of reverence—a very "sybil" in the Priory parlour. This heavy, worshipful air pervades the *Life and Letters* edited by Mr. Cross. Miss Haldane has opened all the windows, yet without ransacking the closets. Her treatment of the new evidence concerning George Eliot's early life in London and her friendship with Chapman and Spencer is both candid and wise. Her portrait reveals the living woman whom we had divined behind the clouds of incense—the vigorous intellect and strong emotions contending with physical frailty and conventional restrictions. "One doubts," says Miss Haldane, "whether life was ever such a solemn or earnest thing as in the fifties, sixties, and seventies." This earnestness, and the weight of discouragement that was the lot of all middle-class women who strove for self-expression, oppressed George Eliot's youth. We to-day can hardly realize the heroic efforts by which women like George Eliot and Harriet Martineau achieved independence. Yet with all her extraordinary powers, George Eliot could not have done her work without the constant encouragement and devoted care of George Henry Lewes. Miss Haldane's keen analysis of that brilliant, erratic *enfant terrible* of Victorian letters enables us to see him as an ideal husband, a very Prince Consort! A recent volume of hitherto unpublished letters of the Lewes family<sup>1</sup> completes this picture of domestic happiness.

In her chapters on the novels and poems, Miss Haldane aims to relate them to the aspects of society or movements of thought which they reflect. Literary or æsthetic criticism she does not essay; for that, we turn to other critics, notably the French: Brunetière, Montégut, de Vogüé. While appreciating George Eliot's power to depict the rural and middle-class life of her girlhood, she points out her limitation—the remoteness from the burning realities of politics and poverty that makes *Felix Holt* so bloodless. With all her sympathy for individual suffering, George Eliot was too sheltered in Victorian respectability to realize social miseries as did Kingsley or Mrs. Gaskell. And so she has suffered from the modern recoil against Victo-

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<sup>1</sup>*George Eliot's Family Life and Letters.* By Arthur Paterson.

rian complacency. How incredible seems that anonymous reviewer of 1860 who could indict *Adam Bede* and *Scenes of Clerical Life* as "unwholesome books—with their indecent details"! Yet readers still turn to her for that "enlargement of men's sympathies" which to her was the true aim of art.

The last chapter, "George Eliot and her Times", lacks the philosophic approach and unified treatment which might have been expected from Miss Haldane's own philosophic training. George Eliot's work coincided with the scientific revolution of the mid-century; her early reading and her association with Spencer and Lewes had made her a student of science; her whole work was steeped in its methods and conceptions. Yet of this connection with the main movement of the age Miss Haldane hardly speaks till the last page. George Eliot's equally great debt to Comte is more adequately treated, but one wishes for a discussion of the extent to which her writings were permeated by the social ideas and moral teachings of Positivism, though she steadfastly refused adherence to it as a sect. Like most of her fellow-rationalists, George Eliot was profoundly religious. Miss Haldane relates her early doubts, the growing pains of her nature and of her period, and indicates her later position. What we miss is the tracing of that soul's progress suggested in a fine passage of Morley's essay on George Eliot; that so typical Victorian journey "from the fervid evangelicalism of her youth through the harsh and crude negations of the London period to her final positive faith and semi-conservative creed of sympathy with the past life and beliefs of man."

If George Eliot voiced the inner struggles and ideals of mid-Victorian England, Anthony Trollope depicted its outer life and practice—its decorums and frailties. Michael Sadleir opens his life of Trollope with an up-to-date definition of mid-Victorianism. The swift rise of the middle-class to wealth and power produced a snobbery and a sanctimony born of the sense of social inferiority. Its quintessence is found in Lady Eastlake's famous review of *Jane Eyre*: "an anti-Christian work—a long murmur against the well-being of the rich and the privations of the poor, that is to say, a murmur against 'the divine will'." That, one feels, is just what Mrs. Proudie would have said.

The most interesting part of Mr. Sadleir's book is the story of Anthony's mother. The dauntless spirit that carried Frances

Trollope through hardships and misfortunes, that turned the ill-starred American expedition into prosperity through her tireless pen, has outlived her writings. But the American reader of to-day, hardened by the assaults of an army of English travellers, can read with keen enjoyment the racy description and caustic comment of her *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. The story of Anthony's life has neither adventure nor romance, yet it is a record of pathos and pluck. That poverty-stricken, tormented childhood, which his own *Autobiography* so frankly revealed, shadowed his prosperous later years with a conviction of inferiority that drove him to justify himself by his writings. Behind the gruff, noisy exterior was hidden a tenderness that glistens in his affection for Kate Field like a gold thread in a serge fabric. And his sympathy with human frailties enabled him, as Sir Walter Raleigh put it, to "start off with ordinary people and make an epic of them".

Mr. Sadleir writes of Trollope's novels like a true Trollopean. So, too, does Hugh Walpole in the admiring and discriminating analysis of his "English Men of Letters" volume on Trollope. The two books indicate that the last word on Trollope is not scorn for his clock-work methods or pedestrian manner but recognition of his achievement as creator of the commonplace.

From Trollope to Gissing is a far cry, for Gissing's work belongs to those troubled 80's and 90's that broke the long "Victorian calm". This volume of Gissing's letters, collected by his brother and sister, falls outside our group of biographical studies, for it presents the letters with almost nothing either of biographical fact or of critical interpretation. In the case of a personality so reticent, so solitary as Gissing, the result is peculiarly unsatisfying. We catch tantalizing glimpses of that shy, sensitive figure who, with none of the buoyancy that carried Meredith through his years of neglect, yet sustained his own years of toil and privation by his passion for ideas and for beauty. He literally lived on Homer and Dante and Plato, on music and pictures. "Hold on to the spirits of the great artists", he urged his sister. One is grateful for the glimpse of him given by Austin Harrison, one of his devoted pupils: a tall, pale, thin, pathetic looking man, with a gentle voice and a

boisterous laugh."<sup>2</sup> And one rejoices that he finally won enough success to assure him a journey to Italy, a home, and a family—some measure of the beauty and peace for which he craved.

The *Letters of George Gissing* points the need of a critical study of Gissing's work, which would trace his development from his early radicalism and Positivism to his later criticism of democracy, and which would relate his work to the currents of nineteenth century fiction. He defined his method when he said, "I must wallow and describe." He realized that he belonged, not with his English contemporaries, but with the French and Russian naturalists. His work has suffered the fate of being overtaken; a follower of Balzac and Tourgeniev has little to say to a generation that sits at the feet of Proust and Dostoievsky. The grim "wallowing" of *The Unclassed* and *The Nether World* no longer shocks us, as it did Frederic Harrison, but neither does it hold us. Perhaps the most lasting of his books is *The Private Life of Henry Ryecroft*, in which the bitterness of his life's experience is distilled into a tranquil, stoic wisdom.

"Meredith and Trollope", says Mr. Priestley in his study of Meredith, "represent the two poles of art of prose fiction": Trollope, the clear narrative, full backgrounds, characters drawn in the round; Meredith, the oblique, devious plot and style, the single scene of intense lyric beauty or comic perception. Mr. Priestley's interpretation of Meredith stands out among many others for its success in integrating his various aspects—man, novelist, poet, philosopher. Meredith's novels he explains as a series of revelations of his own egoism and errors. Yet despite this paradox of Meredith's nature, his comic spirit at war with his fiery passions, he worked through to a philosophy of reconciliation—a faith in nature as the mother of mankind, and in reason as his guide. Hence his long championship of woman: to set her nature free for the life of reason. And hence his unwavering faith: "We grow toward goodness as the plant toward light." "Meredith", declares Mr. Priestley, "almost alone of his generation, does not 'date'". From the Victorian struggle to adjust new ideas to old beliefs

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<sup>2</sup> *Frederic Harrison, Thoughts and Memories.* By Austin Harrison.



he escaped by an essentially modern synthesis. He not only accepted evolution but built upon it a philosophy which reached the two extremes untouched by any other one writer of his time: man at one with nature, and man at home in society.

Perhaps the chief value of the biographies of novelists is to send us back to a re-reading of their novels. Mr. Ames, in his suggestive study of the æsthetics of the novel, claims that the novel ministers better to the modern self than any other art because it includes every other. Upon his analysis of the æsthetic experience as the contemplation of values for their own sake, he bases his claim for the novel as the chief interpreter of our experience and builder of our personalities. "We become wiser and more humane for every good novel which we allow to affect us." And it is good to turn occasionally from the self-consciousness of the modern novel absorbed in the pursuit of the sub-conscious self to novels that have enduring values. Of such fiction we may truly say, as Mr. Priestley says of Meredith's, "We rise from a reading of this fiction at once more critical, more sensitive, and more in love with life than ever."

FRANCES W. KNICKERBOCKER.

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### MISS MILLAY IN TRANSITION

THE BUCK IN THE SNOW. By Edna St. Vincent Millay. New York: Harper and Brothers. Pp. 69.

Not only is the portrait of a mind disclosed in *The Buck in the Snow* but there is also evident an art in the process of transitions. Miss Millay's earlier work, though in content very slight, had an appealing musical quality; much of this singing element has disappeared in the newest poems. Though they are still emotional, these verses reveal the presence of a mind which has produced poems that, while not great in themselves, promise a development unrivalled, I think, by any living American poet.

Perhaps a reason for this change is that Miss Millay seems to have been reading Thomas Hardy and some of the more difficult American poets. In such a poem as *Moriturus*, for instance, Hardy's influence can be distinctly felt. There is also



a note of insurgent social passion which is quite new in Miss Millay's work. Sterility of mind or emotion would never conceive and give birth to such a bitter, hopeless anger as that graphically portrayed in *Justice Denied in Massachusetts*. Then, too, Miss Millay reveals a greater sensitiveness to the more subtle evocative power of words. The penumbra of a word has for her now a greater significance than does its dictionary meaning; and she does not choose words chiefly for their lyric value.

The predominantly interesting feature of *The Buck in the Snow* is its disclosure of Miss Millay's constant experimenting with new techniques. Many poets wait until their poetic vein is almost exhausted before experimenting very much in technique, using intricate rhythms to conceal debilitated vigor. One might conclude this is to be true of Miss Millay, were her sonnets not present in her latest volume to refute it. Some of the best poems in *The Buck in the Snow* are in this traditional, iron-clad form; and one of them, *To Jesus on His Birthday*, deserves a place in any collection of great American sonnets. Miss Millay is engaged in replacing the haunting, but limited, strains of the violin with the full-throated, varied melody of a symphony orchestra; retaining, at the same time, the violin effect for solo parts.

That great poetry cannot be written while a poet is experimenting with technique and make plain his efforts to secure striking effects is evident by this book. Yet in *The Buck in the Snow* we may definitely believe that we have witnessed the emergence of a significant poet.

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### RHETORIC BEFORE BEN JONSON

MEDIEVAL RHETORIC AND POETIC. By Charles Sears Baldwin. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1928. Pp. xvii, 321.

In this volume Professor C. S. Baldwin continues the studies initiated in his *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic*, and traces the development down to 1400. The rhetoric and poetic of the Renaissance had already been well handled by J. E. Spingarn and Donald L. Clark. We now have, for the first time in English, a fairly ade-

quate view of the development of rhetoric and poetic from the time of the Sophists to Ben Jonson.

Throughout the middle ages rhetoric and poetic tended to merge, and the study of rhetoric and poetic was mainly "a lore of style." In the field of rhetoric, the theory and practice of St. Augustine and John of Salisbury furnish the two brilliant exceptions. St. Augustine ignored the ancient sophistic, and, following Cicero, stressed subject matter much more than form. John of Salisbury also ignored the hollow rhetoric of style, and substituted for it an emphasis on logic. In the field of poetic, the departure from medieval theory is best seen in the advance in vernacular poetry, culminating in the work of Dante and Chaucer. (I have mentioned only the major figures. Professor Baldwin treats the minor figures with as great care, though not at as great length, as the major.)

As in his earlier volume, Professor Baldwin has furnished a wealth of detail, copious translations, excellent bibliographical apparatus, and scholarly supplementary footnotes.

THEODORE STENBERG.

The University of Texas.

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### FRENCH CULTURE IN AMERICA

AMERICA AND FRENCH CULTURE. By Howard Mumford Jones. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1927.

In *America and French Culture* Professor Jones has dealt with one of those intangible problems with which we must come to grips if we would understand the national genius. He has made an attempt to give "the general American attitude toward things French in the hundred years when we were closest to that interesting people;" that is, he has studied the impact upon our various social levels of all cultural forces emanating from France from 1750 to 1848. By the time of the earlier date he says "the American colonies had passed from infancy into something like maturity; and by 1848 the French influence commenced to wane before the German one."

The coming of political refugees, particularly to the South and East, caused French influence to grow. During the period of the American Revolution and up until Jackson's administration,

French influence upon politics and manners was pronounced. With the decline of Federalism, and the rise of the middle class, French social prestige was dissipated. For one thing, the Frenchman being volatile and evanescent, was not readily assimilated; but more inimical was the serious Saxon, who mistrusted the Frenchman's view of things, in particular, his religion.

Professor Jones has gone to a prodigious amount of labor to assemble, from diaries, books of travel, and even from obscure cookbooks, evidences of French influence in language, manners, art, religion, and politics during the period under consideration. To the student of literature, his piquant opening chapter, "The Problem of American Literature," and Chapter IX, "The Influence of French Art in America," are of chief importance. The author's use of the comparative method is productive of some valuable results. His identification of the bourgeois spirit with the spirit of the frontier seems, however, too simple to account for all the facts. But his method, and some of his material, will be of service in the study of other influences upon American life. We need in particular a similar study of the influence of German culture as exhibited in our letters. Professor Jones has written this book to pave the way for a study of the American reception of French literature, in which he intends to show that the French were not as light and fickle as they have been thought. It is needless to add that his second book will be awaited with even more interest than his first.

ERNEST E. LEISY.

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### THE FIRST BROAD CHURCHMAN

THOMAS ARNOLD. By the Very Rev. R. J. Campell, D.D. (Great English Churchmen Series. Edited by Sidney Dark.) London: Macmillan and Company. 1927. Pp. xiv, 242.

This is a very interesting outline of the life of "The Great English Schoolmaster", though it is occupied more largely with the religious and social background of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than with the events of Arnold's life. Indeed it is a picture of an early nineteenth-century scholar in the light of the modern problems, forms, and institutions of the

twentieth century. As such it possesses an interest far beyond the biographical outline which is rather meagre. Many pages are occupied with a discussion of the Tractarian or Oxford Movement, with the resultant controversies, and the relation of Church and State.

A few quotations will indicate the salient features of the book. "Arnold himself never came under the influence of Romanticism, except on its poetic side and then only in a moderate degree", chiefly through Coleridge and Wordsworth. But he remained comparatively untouched by the still greater factor of the new mentality which characterized the nineteenth century, that is, the great advance of physical science. "The one great purpose of his life was the expression of the Christian idea in ordered society." His most sincere desire for Rugby was "to make it a place of Christian education". How truly he succeeded the men of Rugby well know. Canon Stow is quoted with approval in the statement that Arnold's liberal views, religious and political, were "those of a man whose whole soul was possessed by a vision of Christian unity." Quotations abound from Stow's *The Development of English Theology of the Nineteenth Century*, and we may add that most of the quotations from Arnold's own writings are taken from the pages of Dean Stanley's great biography.

Much emphasis is laid on Arnold's supposed misunderstanding of the principles and tendencies of the Oxford Movement, when, as a matter of fact, he understood them more clearly than many of his contemporaries, as such a book as Walsh's *Secret History of the Oxford Movement*, so clearly demonstrates.

Altogether, the book does not show a very sympathetic understanding of Arnold's greatness of soul and action; yet it is interesting for the views it takes of nineteenth-century history. The author rightly declares in the first lines of his Preface: "The classical authority for the life of Thomas Arnold is, of course, Stanley's incomparable biography, and there is but little that can now be added to it, or in which its estimates need to be corrected."

CHARLES L. WELLS.

University of the South.



## THE FIRST LOW CHURCHMAN

JOHN WESLEY. By the Very Rev. William Holden Hutton, D.D., Dean of Winchester. (Great English Churchmen Series. Edited by Sidney Dark.) London: Macmillan and Company. 1927, Pp. xvii, 181.

This is one of a series of studies of the lives of English bishops and priests, including also Thomas Arnold, Thomas à Becket, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop Laud, with other volumes to follow. In the Preface we are told "there has never been one who made so great a mark upon the history of the country, and, it may be, even more, beyond its shores as John Wesley. None, it is safe to say, moved more men and women to a life of holiness and philanthropy." The author quotes Lecky's statement with approval that because of Wesley's great religious movement the doctrines of the French Revolution never took root in England. This is stated as a fact by Dr. Campbell, also, in his life of Thomas Arnold in this same series. "Augustine Birrell is perhaps right in his belief that the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield had in a period of widespread ignorance and social discontent, much to do, with saving England from the horrors of the French Revolution, and it is a fact which ought to be fully acknowledged that the evangelical preachers of the eighteenth century were the pioneers of social reform."

It is a significant fact which ought to be more carefully emphasized and understood that Wesley was essentially a Churchman, and believed with all his heart in a corporate religion. "I am," he said, "no friend to solitary Christianity." Of the best side of the eighteenth century which was, *par excellence*, the age of common sense, Wesley is certainly typical. "He was indeed an Organizer of Victory, and, one might say, the first of the Benevolent Despots." "Wesley's influence is as wide and as enduring as Napoleon's and more permanent than Bismarck's." "Obscurely born and imperfectly educated though he might be, he rose to be the leader of what was almost a religious revolution." In regard to the Church of England, which so wickedly disowned him, he declared repeatedly and, at the very end of his life, most solemnly, "I never had any design of separating from the Church. I do not believe the Methodists in general design it. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event. I declare once more that I live and die a mem-



ber of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment will ever separate from it." The loss of the Methodists was a heavy blow to the Anglican Church, from which she is still suffering in England and in America, and it is manifestly due to her own action.

The closing chapters entitled, "The Last Years", giving an account of his attempted management of women; and "John Wesley As He Lived", are most interesting.

The book as a whole is very helpful for an understanding of the life of this good and great man, and will be read with much interest and profit, for it is written with sympathy and understanding.

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### BABBITT HAS WINGS

**BUSINESS THE CIVILIZER.** By Ernest Elmo Calkins. Boston: Little Brown & Co. 1928. Pp. 309.

**AMERICAN PROSPERITY: ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.** By Paul M. Mazur. New York: Viking Press, 1928. Pp. 268.

Babbitt was something more than a member of the Bunch, the Good Citizen playing the real estate game. He was a dreamer, and dreams came to him when he was restless and dissatisfied, when working and boosting did not seem worth the bother,—dreams "more romantic than scarlet pagodas by a silver sea". Not he, Babbitt, not to be the first to hail reg'lar key industries ranking right up with groceries and movies and automobiles. He could dress the high gods in Klassy Kollege Klothes. But now comes Mr. Calkins: "Men are bringing to it [to business] some of the qualities which actuate the explorer, scientist, artist—the zest, the open-mindedness, even the disinterestedness with which the scientific investigator explores some field of pure research". Since Babbitt's tentative dreaming, Business have grown mighty wings. Business ranks now with the intellectually elect. It wears a crown, wired and lighted by the Advertiser. What of the wastes of the distributive process and its enormous social costs which offset all the savings in the costs of producing goods? The answering shout is, Business (like all God's children) Has Wings! And the story

of the up-to-date Prince Charming runs among the populace in colorful phrases of romance and adventure and deliverance. There was a little girl once upon a time (page Hans Anderson) who observed that the king was naked when the world believed him clothed in all the colors of the rainbow. Alas! the age of stories is over, and I am not a child. What if I said that the Advertiser has only presented an argumentative defense, a special plea in the best of language and taste? What if I call for some objective standard of evaluation? Nobody would listen to my weary common sense. Advertising, booms Mr. Calkins, will replace the beauty that the age of machinery had displaced. It is the King's boon to his people. And from the grandstands they call in unison: We Want Beauty!

My heart goes out to the folk, the men, women, and children yearning for beauty. I, too, love beauty and truth and life. And if the King's Advertiser scorns me, I will seek out his Minister of Finance. Mazur, the great banker of Wall Street, will show me the inward parts of Business the Bringer of Beauty. Here is Mazur himself. Instantly he understood what was troubling me and my thoughts so disloyal to the new régime. He became emphatic. American prosperity, he argued, was saved by selling effort, by suggestion, by whooping it up, by breaking down the caution and resistance of those men, women and, aye, children. It was the great Advertiser who stimulated old wants and created new wants for radios and cars and encyclopedias and culture, even with payments to come over long months out of future earnings. The Advertiser running before the king is the sole cause of our prosperity and greatness. Hear me, thou teacher of our youth! Bending over me, he solemnly measured his words: "Men may smile at the American Babbitt—the go-getter who platitudinously and sometimes illiterately says he believes in America and busily bends his shoulder to the task of building business bigger and better. But upon the shoulders of that Babbitt rests the system that has afforded the very time and the very inclination for the smile of the scoffer." He left me and, pale and trembling, I returned to my study like a whipped dog who did not know his master's hand. I was disloyal, because I did not assume as truth that prosperity was the increase in buying power, because I demanded to know how the national income

was distributed, because I feared the social consequences. Of real causes and consequences he, the great banker, pretended to speak, but actually dismissed the topic as rudely as he had dismissed me, saying that talk like mine "would divert the stream of discussion from business to sociology". Aha! . . . Oh, thou fleet-footed Advertiser! Oh, thou clever Banker! I laughed, I cried, I shook my fist at them in my darkened room; I laughed in my victory, and cried to hear the full heart of my folk outpoured to false deliverers.

EUGENE M. KAYDEN.

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THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY OF EQUALITY. By T. V. Smith. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1927. Pp. 339.

Professor Smith has made a distinguished contribution to political thought by a re-examination of the philosophic doctrine of natural equality from pioneer conditions of colonial America to the present. Equalitarianism is today without its former metaphysical foundations, but the doctrine persists in the face of every legal and scientific denial, because as a shibboleth it challenges and awakens minds, because it is dear to democracy as an emotional concept and as a goal of social justice. The important question is not equality but the treatment of human beings as if they were equal, seeing that modern social science takes the individual as a factor in a co-operative, integrated, world-wide democracy.

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SEVERAL OF MY LIVES. By Louis N. Parker. London: Chapman and Hall. 1928.

No one could touch life at so many points as he who is perhaps best known in America as the author of *Disraeli*, and not have a great deal to say that is worth hearing; and the reader of Mr. Parker's genial autobiography will find much to interest him. Mr. Parker came of American ancestry, was born in France, schooled in Europe and England rather informally, and settled in England, where his life has been largely spent, with frequent trips not only on the continent, but to the United States; here many of his plays have met with a warm reception. He has known many artists on both sides of the Atlantic; as a musician and playwright and "pageanter" he has had a career which vies with that of the most prolific Elizabethan, and his book shows his exuberance and unquenchable youth.